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ABSTRACT

This collection of papers represents an attempt to define better the purposes and content of education among the indigenous peoples of the circumpolar north. All the papers, except one on the Soviet Union, were written by members of indigenous groups in the far north. They are professionally involved in the field of Native education in their respective countries. (The exception was prepared by a scholar from England whose special field of expertise derives from his study of the indigenous minority peoples of the Soviet north.) In his paper, "Education and the Native Saamis," Jan Henry Keskitalo expresses the need to have a realistic relationship among the school, the local Saami society, and the majority society of Scandinavia. Ingmar Egede, in his paper "Education in Greenland, 1985," offers a general review of the Greenland educational situation from the early 18th century to 1985. In "Educational Opportunities for the Native Canadian," Mary Cousins deals specifically with education of the Inuit people of the Northwest Territories. Terence Armstrong reviewed available documents to synthesize a comprehensive description: "Education of Minority Peoples in Northern USSR." William Demmert's "Native Education: The Alaskan Perspective" is an historical review of education for Alaska Natives which also provides the background for a description of current programs and activities for Native Alaskan students. (TES)

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# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND EDUCATION IN THE CIRCUMPOLAR NORTH

(One among a series of papers on educational programs and policies regarding indigenous populations in Canada, Greenland, the Saami area, the Soviet Union, and Alaska)

Presented at the

University of Alaska-Juneau
May 19-24, 1985

Edited by

William G. Demmert, Jr.
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# INTRODUCTION

Frank Darnell

When first encountered, the papers collected in this publication may seem to be a disconnected lot, coming from as many geographic locales and containing as many topical varieties as they do. However, the papers focus on a common goal: seeking ways to better define the purposes and content of education among the indigenous peoples of the circumpolar north and prescribe the means to improve it. All of the papers (except the one on the USSR) have been written by individuals with dual qualifications for addressing their subject. The authors are members of indigenous groups in the far north and are professionally involved in the field of Native education in their respective countries. The exception, the paper on the USSR, has been prepared by a scholar from England whose special field of expertise derives from his study of the indigenous minority peoples of the Soviet north. All of the authors possess a common characteristic: membership in an international committee that has planned and sponsored a series of international seminars on Native education over the past ten years. It is an interesting and informative backdrop to these papers to note how the group came to be and what prompts the group to stay intact.

Ten years prior to publication of this collection, individuals from Alaska, the Canadian Arctic, Greenland, Norway, and Great Britain came together to assess the feasibility of an international effort to bring about improved education among indigenous peoples of the far north. Six years earlier, in 1969, soon after the conclusion of the First International Conference on Cross-Cultural Education in the North (a conference notable for its dearth of Native participants), several of the organizers realized that if future efforts to improve education in the far north were to be of value, the people such programs were designed to serve would have to comprise a majority of the group initiating those efforts. Until that period of history, with but few exceptions, non-Natives had made all of the major decisions affecting

educational policies in all of the countries that encircle the polar basin. But in the late 1960s and early 1970s there emerged several Native groups that were calling on their respective governments to recognize the principles of self-determination and devolution of central authority in education policy and practices. Concurrently, a growing cadre of scholars in each of the circumpolar nations was developing a base of knowledge for dealing with the problems of cross-cultural education in the far north and examining the means for implementing the goals of the various Native groups.

Although the academic community and Native people in general had their special perspectives and areas of expertise, neither had sufficient means to be heard with much effect. What needed to be done was fundamental: bring the two groups together for a common purpose. Collectively, it was reasoned, they could influence policies and programs to a much greater extent than either could acting independently of each other.

The group responsible for this publication grew out of that concept. Formed in 1975, it has since then been known as the Steering Committee for the International Cross-Cultural Education Seminar Series in the Circumpolar North.[1] The Committee developed the series of seminars around the themes of Native involvement in education processes. Three purposes for holding the series were agreed to. The seminars were expected to:

(1) Provide indigenous minority groups from each of the participating countries with the opportunity to meet on their own terms and accelerate their own individual educational improvement movements by learning through examples of fellow indigenous minority participants from other northern regions.

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[1]A list of the Committee members appears following the papers.

(2) Document that Native groups are in the process of trying to assume responsibility for education or are in the process of assuming it, and examine how each indigenous group might best acquire the legal means to exercise this responsibility.

(3) Document and disseminate experiences of northern indigenous peoples in a way that will allow groups from other regions of the world to examine northern experiences for possible application wherever indigenous minority people are trying to reduce educational deficiencies.

These three purposes remain no less compelling today than ten years ago, but because of recent advances in Native education, fulfilling them has become more complex. Thus, each seminar, although initiated and assisted by the Steering Committee, a local sponsoring group that stages needs, further assures that local concerns and conditions are taken into account. The local group decides how it wants the seminar to be constituted, who the participants shall be, and what outcomes they expect.

The Steering Committee never has had official standing with any governmental agency or academic institution, although an informal relationship exists with several agencies and institutions through individual members of the Committee. Essentially, the Committee is an anomaly among established organizations with governmental or institutional authority, a condition that gives it unique character. Perhaps a strength is that the group's autonomy diffuses potential threats to any outside group or individual. Authority the group may have acquired over the years derives from the knowledge its members bring to the subject and the considerable influence on Native education that the seminars have had throughout the north. It is the unique make-up of the Committee, the commitment of its individual members, and the substance of the seminars themselves that account for the success and longevity of the group. But this is not to say that many government agencies and academic institutions have not supported the seminars with money, physical resources, and release time for

personnel. Substantial and very necessary assistance has come from a wide variety of governments, academic institutions, and philanthropic organizations, especially the Ford Foundation. It was a Ford Foundation grant that initially enabled the Committee to organize the seminars and to invite a wide range of Native participants. The grant was awarded to the Scott Polar Research Institute of the University of Cambridge, which since the outset has served as an administrative base for the work of the Committee. The considerable support afforded the Committee notwithstanding, the most compelling reason for recounting its activities in this introduction is to draw attention to the impact the seminars have had on the nature of education all across the circumpolar north. Policymakers in every country involved have described how their ideas have been positively influenced by work of the group and how ultimately within official policies are embedded some of the thinking to emerge from the seminar series.

In short, it may be said that the work of the Committee has facilitated a means for learning how indigenous minorities from separate political regions, but with similar environments, have perceived and approached common problems in educational and related social matters. Indigenous minorities with relatively common backgrounds and common problems, who heretofore have been geographically separated, now come together in a community of like-minded people with common goals. These developments have influenced the condition of education today in a favorable way.

Thus, the meeting at the University of Alaska-Juneau, held at the Auke Lake campus in May 1985 with Dr. William G. Demmert, Jr., presiding, was an extension of an enterprise that has been underway for ten years. The Committee consists of many of the original members along with a few new ones. Members now on the Committee include Alaskan Indians and Eskimos; Canadian Inuit; Native Greenlanders; a Saami from the north of Norway; and four non-Native academics, one from Alaska, one from Norway, one from Denmark (an authority on education in Greenland), and one from Britain (the Committee's specialist on Soviet indigenous minorities in the

northern part of the USSR). The Committee is presently formulating plans for a major seminar tentatively scheduled for the summer of 1987 to be held in Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories.

The papers that follow were commissioned by the Alaska State Department of Education as a means to bring the Committee and followers of the seminar series up to date on developments in each of the participating countries. Although few in number (five) and relatively brief, they serve their purpose well and provide an interesting commentary on education in the major regions of the far north.

In his paper "Education and the Native Saamis," Jan Henry Keskitalo shows his concern for the need to have a realistic relationship among the school, the local Saami society, and the majority society of Scandinavia. The need for Saami culture in the school has been recognized by Scandinavian governments for many years. But evidence that this fundamental concept has been applied is hard to find, especially where it concerns use of the Saami language, according to Keskitalo.

Ingmar Egede, in his paper, uses the historic perspective to describe education in Greenland. He conducts a general review of the Greenland situation from the early eighteenth century when formal education was initiated up to contemporary times.

In the paper from Canada, Mary Cousins has chosen to deal specifically with educational opportunities for Inuit residing in the Northwest Territories. She uses a hypothetical Inuit family to describe a composite picture of educational opportunities in the Canadian Arctic. Although there are many educational opportunities serving a broad cross-section of Inuit society, Cousins concludes her paper with a list of shortcomings in the present system and expresses the need for Native self-determination as a means to overcome them.

Education for the Native peoples of "The Soviet North" remains an elusive topic. Not enough is known in the West to satisfy our curiosity about the situation there. But Terence Armstrong has reviewed available documents thought to be reliable and has come up with a comprehensive statement on what education among the indigenous minorities of the northern sector of the USSR must be like. It appears that there may be much to be learned from the Soviet experience. Before that can happen, however, there will have to be more firsthand contact with Soviet programs of education, both through observations in the Soviet north by Westerners and participation by Soviet officials and Natives in mutual exchanges such as those provided in the seminar series.

The Alaskan perspective on Native education has been addressed by Bill Demmert. A review of the history of Native education in Alaska provides the background for Demmert's description of current programs and activities for Native Alaskan students. When all of the programs that are now underway in Alaska are displayed in sequence as Demmert has done, it can be seen just how much has been accomplished in recent years. But when viewed in terms of the enormity of the problems yet to be resolved, it is obvious that much remains to be done.

All of the papers stress the importance of local culture and language as part of the schooling process. In retrospect, therefore, the papers are not as disconnected as they may at first seem to be. There are similarities that speak to the universality of the broader topic. Thus, it is hoped that through these papers readers will not only acquire new ideas for application in their own spheres of work, but also recognize that the never-ending effort of providing for better education among the Native peoples of the far north is shared among many, from both near and afar.

# EDUCATION AND THE NATIVE SAAMIS

Jan Henry Keskitalo

## A Short Introduction

The Saami people are the indigenous people of northern Scandinavia. They constitute an ethnic group with its own language, its own place in history, and its own mode of basic subsistence. Today, the Saami population is spread over a vast region, covering three quarters of the Scandinavian inland and the Kola Peninsula of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). There is a Saami majority in some of the municipalities in the northern part of Finland, Norway, and Sweden. There has never been a satisfactory form of registration, but the total number of Saami inhabitants is estimated to be between 50,000 and 100,000, with an additional 2,000 living in the USSR.

The Saami language is not uniform throughout the Saami area. There are three main dialects, with the northern Saami language being spoken by the majority of the Saami-speaking Saamis today. Language boundaries do not bear any relationship to state boundaries. They continue to cross the boundaries in accordance with earlier cultural and economic patterns.

Today, Saami identity is constituted by a variety of factors that change from one area to another and from one situation to another. Among these factors, language is important, but so are historic variables, which are knitted to family relationships and family feeling, and a particular type of Christianity. In addition, as in Sweden, membership in reindeer breeding societies is a strong element in identity.

The Saami people do not have any constitutional acknowledgment. There is, however, ad hoc recognition in the areas of education and in reindeer breeding regulations and law. Funds are allotted for Saami broadcasting and cultural pursuits. There are also special plans for economic development in the Saami

areas. There is no formal representation in national parliaments or in decision-making executive offices of the countries of which they are a part.

National Systems of Education

Compulsory education in the Saami area is operated by public authorities. It is built into a comprehensive school system. The main idea of the comprehensive school is to standardize a basic education for all children. All children are then, in principle, able to secure a basic education of equal quality.

Education in compulsory schools is organized around school districts and encompasses all children from the ages of 7 through 16. Comprehensive schooling is divided into two main stages, a primary stage comprising grades 1-6 and the lower secondary stage comprising grades 7-9. At the primary stage, the school has a very decentralized structure, with many small school units. At the lower secondary stage, the school districts are somewhat larger. The responsibility for operating compulsory schools rests with the communes (municipalities). There are, however, general directions drawn up by Acts of Education and ministerial regulations. Each commune has a local school board to administer all the schools run by the same commune. The school board is responsible for appointment of teachers, choice of textbooks, decisions about school rules, annual financial budgeting, the curriculum, and teaching. The composition of the school board reflects the relative strength of the local political parties. The members are elected by the representatives of the commune council.

Compulsory education is funded through federal budgets annually. This means that the operational costs of compulsory education are paid by the communes, but the government contributes grants to the local authorities in varying degrees, depending on each commune's financial capacity (in Norway, between 25-85 percent of local costs).

Curriculum guidelines for the comprehensive schools are composed at the national level. These guidelines are not prescriptive; in principle, they allow freedom of choices for individual schools and classes.

Saami education, in the whole Saami area, is an integrated part of each national education system. As you will learn later, national systems also provide different ways of dealing with Saami education, as there are different ways of solving problems related to the particular organization, geography, language, and other factors of the different areas. This flexibility provides a variety of approaches to Saami education in the various locales. Before proceeding further, we shall first look at some principles of the relationship between education and society. These principles make it possible to understand why national systems today represent a way of thinking that is not compatible with the needs of Saami education.

Some Other Factors Affecting Saami Education

The Saami language is not officially recognized. This means that official executive offices or municipal offices use the Saami language in their formal capacity only on occasion. This practice affects the official policy of appointing employees. As long as a Saami speaker is not required in government work, it is not necessary at all to ask for a knowledge of the Saami language when advertising positions. This also causes the private sector to manage its operations in the same way. Language policies may change, for Saami language seems to be used more and more in the last few years. However, even Saami public radio, covering most parts of the Saami area, lacks the resources to act as an instrument to influence policies which act against the use of the Saami language. There are today no TV programs in the Saami language; this also affects the children's language situation in a major way. To use the language as a factor of cultural development in a modern society calls for a well organized and well funded daily and illustrated press, but has been difficult to establish Saami

newspapers. Today, there is only one Saami newspaper, published twice a week. In addition, there are two magazines published in the Saami language, with four to five volumes a year. A modern society needs writers of both poetry and prose. They are increasing, but it takes time because we are talking about changes in the habit of language production and use in a culture, a change from an oral language to a written one. A planned language policy also needs support from research and other institutions communicating language norms in the written language. Those few institutes doing this kind of work need more resources before they are able to have any significant effect on language planning. But most of all, we need a law protecting the use of the Saami language and formal educational opportunity in it.

## Some Examples from the Present Situation

The Saami language has no status as an official language in Finland, Norway, or Sweden. Education in the Saami language at the primary and secondary levels is regulated by education statutes. The status of the Saami language, or the lack of a formal status, has been one of the central themes of discussion through many years in terms of cultural equality and cultural rights.

In Norway, the lack of formal status has diverted the discussion of the Saami language in education from a question of the cultural rights belonging to or concerning an ethnic group, as intended by the parliament, to a question of individual rights. The right to be taught in and through one's vernacular is in Norway understood as a right belonging to an individual, and it reflects the position of Saamis as an ethnic group in the Norwegian constitution. The group is not considered a group of indigenous people with certain rights. The right to learn Saami at school (the use of the Saami language as the language of instruction) follows different principles in the different parts of the Saami area. These varying principles, then, affect the future because they give different ways or a variety of possible ways to act as a Saami, even under conditions that are related. This

point is critical in terms of people's future identity as Saamis. In Finland, the Saamis can claim the right to be taught in the Saami language only in "Saami home-areas"; in other terms, the right is geographically restricted at all levels in primary education. In Norway, there is a similar restriction (although this is changing during 1985), covering all education at the primary level. Nor do the pupils have the opportunity to claim the right to being taught through the Saami language. In Sweden, a Saami child has the right to learn Saami language at school if the Saami language is a daily language in the child's home milieu. In addition, Saami children in Sweden have the right to be taught in the other school subjects through their vernacular. The situation of the Saamis in Sweden, in terms of educational rights, is similar to those of immigrants. In Norway, different groups of immigrants have had less trouble claiming educational rights than have the Saamis as indigenous people. Nevertheless, even though the formal situation is as described, it seems that the situation in Norway, in practice, is better than the rights given through statutes.

Saami pupils with the Saami language as their home language in comprehensive schools in Sweden were reported to total 332; their number has not been increasing in recent years. In Sweden, at the gymnasium level, it was reported that 39 Saami-speaking students were receiving their education in the Saami language. This number has not been increasing. In Sweden, as in other situations, registration of Saami pupils is restricted to the number receiving education in the Saami language. There is no registration of Saami students in general.

In Finland, the number of pupils in the comprehensive school getting education in the Saami language in 1984 was about 50. This is perhaps lower than the correct number. In Finland, also, the situation is stable.

In Norway, for the school year 1983-84, 1,417 pupils received their education in the Saami language. Among those, 647 were

reported to have Saami as their first language. In Norway, there has been an increasing number of pupils learning Saami language as a second language. The first language level has been stable over the recent years.

Education and Society

The basic principle of education of any people is that education has to be planned and organized in and through the language and the culture of the group. This principle may be demonstrated by analyzing the connections between education and society. Each society, separately, has its own practical and theoretical knowledge, as its members have specific norms of behavior and values. These are parts of the cultural habits within the group and the society. These habits are undergoing a continuous change. Depending on the structure of the society, the quality and the rapidity of these changes are different. But it also means that cultural habits usually change more slowly than changes in technology, in the economy, and in the organization. Cultural habits in societies of a low degree of specialization change more slowly than in societies of a high degree of specialization, and changes in technology have different implications and different outcomes in a highly specialized society than in societies which have a low degree of specialization.

In less complex societies, cultural habits are shared and are common to a greater part of the society's members than in more complex societies. Knowledge, habits of behavior, and value norms are more static, while in highly differentiated societies they are of a more dynamic character.

In low-specialized societies, shared cultural values are transmitted from one generation to the next basically through informal learning, through socialization, through self-experience, and by limitation of situations where there is interaction between different generations. In a more industrialized and complex society, which is rapidly evolving, values are transmitted through

learning in more formalized situations, for example, in the formal learning in schools and through education transferring more theoretical knowledge. The formal educational system is, then, an instrument of socialization. Its task is basically to act as a catalyzer, transferring cultural heritage into terms of common knowledge and passing on only a sample of cultural values from one generation to another. The educational system has taken over the role of raising the new generation; it prepares the pupils to be members of the future society at the same time that it qualifies the pupils to be professionals and to take part in further education.

Since different societies have to solve different problems, they need different educational systems. In a multi-cultural society, this fact has to be taken into consideration. If, then, the system is planned without taking this into consideration, it means the school will not meet the needs of different subsocieties. Among these subsocieties, indigenous people constitute a group with specific needs, particularly with regard to an educational system structured to solve problems connected with the maintenance of their cultural heritage and values and the transmission of these to future generations. Of course, other groups also could take up this position, but we are talking in terms of the ethnic heritage of groups outside any kind of formal constitutional nationality as these are defined by western societies. It is a well known fact that different geographical, social, and ethnic groups may have different interests. This also has to be based on different criteria; educational decisions should not merely reflect the distribution of political power.

Beside the transformation of values taking place in the educational system mentioned above, the system also has a hidden society in terms of what it reflects through its reorganization, its values, its choice of goals and methods, and its decisions regarding equipment and teacher qualifications.

These are integrated into the system itself and are easily transferred to new systems or to systems undergoing a change. We should be aware of them. This does not mean that the school is unable to exist as an institution for learning particular subjects in any particular context. But if the school is seen to have a special role in terms of transferring cultural values, these facts have to be taken into consideration.

Otherwise, we are talking about an educational system reflecting maladjusted relationships of power between states and indigenous people. The child will experience the school as a meaningful situation only to the degree there is a significant relationship between the child's cultural values, represented by the culture of the home and the culture of the educational system represented by the local school. This does not mean that the school has to transfer the culture of the home only. It also has to impart necessary knowledge in terms of technical development and all kinds of professional knowledge needed in the future society. We need, however, to stress what kind of identity the school must reflect. For people in the Saami areas, the educational system has to be based on and has to be an integrated part of the Saami culture, and all education has to be planned around Saami language and culture.

## Education and Equality

The society in the areas where the Saami live differs from other parts of Scandinavia in terms of the degree of modernization and differentiation. We are dealing with societal situations and cultural contexts that are quite different from those of the major society. This fact is even more complex as within the different Saami societies there are different degrees of modernization, differentiation, and different economic patterns.

Compared to these situations, the national educational systems, in principle, reflect societies of quite a different degree of modernization, with a different economy and different cultural

values. The conceptualization of equality in terms of rights and in terms of humanitarian values is accepted by the governments of the Nordic countries. But in the case of education, as well as other sectors of federal interest, it has been a long process, indeed a long battle, for these ideas to be put into practice. Since World War II, there has been a change in federal policy. Today, it is, in principle, possible to allow the local society to be more and more both the basis and the field of learning. Though not caused by specific Saami needs, there has been a movement, a change in the philosophy of education, and a change in the focus of power for defining ideas; these make it easier to promote necessary innovations in Saami education. Based on this view, one could characterize the educational system, at least its intention, as a natural part of different societies. What, then, is the problem?

Now, is school acts differently because of hidden subsystems in the system despite the intentions of the legislation. Results from research show that children with a cultural background different from that reflected by the system more often than others experience education as less meaningful and more often fail in reaching the same educational standards as the dominant group. These facts have, at least in Sweden and Norway, motivated educational innovators more and more to start looking at connections between education and society. As a part of this shifting focus, the local society and the local culture move from a position as an artificial motivation of education to the position of being the resource, or from a position of being pseudo-accepted to being accepted. Despite this change, the education of today, still to a high degree, reflects those cultures with an abstract mode of thinking and problem solving; that is, the school generally reflects urban middle-class values. As a result of this, children from other societal groups, like the Saamis, experience the school as a foreign institution and, more or less, try to hide themselves from the socialization process carried out by the educational system. To the degree that the educational system does succeed in its process, its attitude towards the home

culture could also possibly be transferred to the pupils, separating them from home or the culture of their homes, preventing them from positive achievements in education. A possible method of overcoming these problems or preventing such a situation is to make analyses of the connections between the school as a social system and the surrounding society. The outcome of all this must be that relations between society and school are real relations at all levels, at the level of organization, of the goals of education, of the curricula selected, the content of subjects, the quality of teacher training, and the behavior of the teaching body. There must be coordination between all these elements. This calls for real cooperation between school and society. In the light of this manner of thinking, a Saami school in a Saami society means a school reflecting the knowledge and habits of Saami culture, of the Saami way of thinking, and of Saami language and history.

## Fragments of a Saami Educational Philosophy

Even if we could talk about fragments of a Saami educational philosophy, we must take into consideration that they are formed in close cooperation with certain ways of thinking about sociology and education. Are there, then, elements of a Saami educational philosophy which are possible to describe? We do have some examples from a paper presented by the director of the Nordic Saami Institute at the seminar on cross-cultural issues in Guovdageaidnu, Norway, during the summer of 1978. The following ideas were described:

--education should have its basis in the local environment, within the structure of the local society and

--education is necessary to preserve, strengthen, and develop sources of income.

This means that vocational training programs must be based on the organization of resource utilization and must correspond

with the wishes of the people. It also means that education of indigenous people must include possibilities of forming curricula in concert with their cultural values, their form of social solidarity, but also their way of organizing resource utilization. Furthermore, local values and the local environment must be the primary base for making curricula. This means that the educational system of indigenous people must preserve the environment, the balance of the ecological system, the promotion of values which prevent the destruction of cultural and social values, and preserve the social environment of groups in the area. It also means that the educational system has to reflect the present multilingual situation in the Saami area. The school has to reflect both the local language and the language of the majority.

Calling these ideas fragments of an educational philosophy and with the principles of correspondence between education and society in mind, it is then possible to examine the educational opportunities of the native Saami population in the Saami area.

These principles described above were accepted by the Norwegian Parliament almost twenty-five years ago. But these principles are not realized. It has been almost impossible to adjust the laws of education at different levels to correspond with the principles. This is a picture of the legal situation covering the whole Saami area.

During the last few years, the Saami Education Council in Norway has been working on principles for a new educational policy for Saami education. This work is taking place at the same time as efforts to widen educational innovation at the national level and to revise the national frame curriculums. The revision itself provides an opportunity to give primary education a more local design within the framework of general national lines for each different subject. This means that the pupils still have to work with the general core of subjects and, within these subjects, to work with samples of basic subthemes. The concrete framing of the school, however, has to be done at the

local level. With these possibilities given, the degree of success depends on how the local school board and the local school are able to use these opportunities. Creation of a Saami school for Saami children seems also to depend on the same factors as long as the municipality is responsible for primary education. A new idea could fail due to the old fashioned organization with the same people in new roles but without the necessary education in the new philosophy and the resources to really work through a new policy of education for future societies.

The Saami Education Council formulated two basic statements: (1) the school must give the new generations of Saamis possibilities to take an active part in societal interaction and (2) at the same time and as a part of this, the school must give the Saamis the possibility both to conserve and further create their ethnic and cultural identity.

How can this be made possible?

## Educational Research as a Key to the Future

During the year of 1984, the Saami Education Council initiated a research committee report containing future education research programs. This material was used as documentation for the Ministry of Education in terms of getting research programs federally funded. Similar documentation has not been prepared before this. The council did not succeed in getting the resources to start these programs, except for a grant of 200,000 NOK (which is about 20,000 United States dollars) to be used during 1985.

Today, the status in terms of planned, organized research programs seems to be that no institution has the necessary resources to coordinate and support programs that are basic elements in designing future education programs.

# EDUCATION IN GREENLAND - 1985

Ingmar Egede

The following pages contain information about the schools and educational communities of Greenland. The information is brief and does not pretend to comprehensively cover all of the fields described.

The content of the teaching programs in each kind of school will normally represent Greenlandic variations of known themes taken from Danish programs. Often, one will see parallels to what would be seen in Denmark. For instance, is the Metal Workers' School in Nuuk as well equipped as most Danish schools of its kind? In other kinds of educational programs, for example teacher training, one will see more freedom from tradition than one will see in countries with a longer educational history.

Home rule was established in 1979. One of the Greenland parliament's early intentions with the establishment of home rule was to decrease the number of young people going to Denmark for schooling and advanced education. The number of institutions mentioned in this paper and the broad variety among them will show that parliament's intentions, to a large degree, have become a reality.

Until the beginning of home rule, a student's economy was based on governmental guaranteed loans, which had to be paid back after finishing the training or education. After 1980, our students were paid wages. This income does not have to be paid back if the training is completed. Only those students dropping out of school are required to partially reimburse the government.

Dropouts, a major concern of the educator, represent but one of the many problems one encounters in the relatively young educational system in Greenland. The lack of Greenlandic teachers in nearly every subject field, the instability of teaching staff, a lack of textbooks written in the students' mother tongue, the

cultural confusion of many young people as a result of the fast transition from a hunting society to an industrial one all constitute problems to be solved. The number of Greenlanders taking over jobs in every field once held by Danes is growing fast. This tendency is happening at all job levels and is a direct result of the efforts to use local people.

Another aspect worth mentioning is the growing attention being given to the Greenlandic language by the young people. The language is developing new concepts within nearly every field, which means that the language is rapidly developing as a useful language in a modern society. Evaluational discussions on the present situation have been sparse. The citizens in Greenland are part of the turmoil, each in their own way, with little time to reflect on the impact. Local literature dealing with these issues is very sparse.

Home Rule

Through a revision of the Danish Constitutional Act in 1953, Greenland formally became an equal part of Denmark. Twenty-six years later, in 1979, Home Rule was established.

As a result of this latest development, the Greenland Home Rule Parliament received legislative authority over education and other matters. This authority includes responsibility over public schools (primary and secondary), vocational training, and other educational activities.

The present condition of Greenland's educational system is a result of a sequence of events that began with the arrival of the Danish/Norwegian missionary Hans Egede in 1721. Literacy has been a common virtue in Greenland for more than one century, with formalized teacher training as a part of the system since 1845.

The Law on Church and School, passed by the Danish Rigsdag (the Danish Parliament) in 1905, transferred administrative authority from the church to the politician. Revision of the curricula and the building of schools all over Greenland made it possible to offer fundamental schooling to everyone, not just a privileged few.

In 1925, Danish became a required subject along with compulsory schooling through grade seven. Secondary schooling was offered to a very select number of young people until the late 1950s. For many years, entrance to the secondary schools was only offered every second year because of restricted economic and human resources, a fact that significantly influenced the selection of students. Secondary schooling led most of the students into catechist and/or teacher training. Until the beginning of the 1960s, nearly all instruction in the schools was Greenlandic.

During the decade of the 1970s, there was a strong desire among Greenlanders to move away from the dominance of Danish control over all education policy. This attitude had a significant influence over decisions on all educational programs. Thus, when the Greenlandic Landsting held its first assembly in May 1979, a large number of proposals concerning cultural and educational issues were acted upon. Among the most important to education included decisions on primary schooling and teacher training in the October assembly of the same year.

The following pages provide an overview of the primary school, the secondary school, vocational schools, and teacher training.

## The Greenland Public School

The schools of Greenland today are municipal in nature and under Home Rule. The central administration of the educational

system is under the Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs. Legal authority for public schools comes from the Landsting Regulation No. 6 of October 16, 1979.

TABLE 1

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GREENLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

| | Grade | Age | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Continuation | 13 | 18-19 | Extended School Leaving |
| School (voluntary) | 12 | 17-18 | Examinations |
| Secondary | 11 | 16-17 | School Leaving |
| School (voluntary) | 10 | 15-16 | Examinations |
| Basic School | 9 | 14-15 | |
| | 8 | 13-14 | |
| | 7 | 12-13 | |
| | 6 | 11-12 | |
| | 5 | 10-11 | |
| | 4 | 9-10 | |
| Preparatory | 3 | 8-9 | |
| School | 2 | 7-8 | |
| (compulsory) | 1 | 6-7 | |

The Aims

The aims for the Greenlandic School System are found in the Landsting Regulation of October 16, 1979, and include the following:

"The aim of the Greenland school is, in cooperation with the pupils' parents:

--to further the development, intellectually and physically, of the pupil's natural capacities and faculties;

--to develop the pupil's ability to think independently and to cooperate;

--to give pupils proficiencies that will serve as a useful basis for their development as individuals;

--to foster in pupils a sense of responsibility toward themselves and toward society so that they, on this basis, will show understanding for others;

--to give an all-around vocational guidance; and

--to prepare the pupils to participate actively in society and in a world of constant development.

Subsection 1: The aim of instruction in religious knowledge is, in cooperation with the pupils' homes and with the Greenland Church, to familiarize the pupils with the value system within the Lutheran outlook."

Compulsory schooling for all Greenlandic students is through grade nine. This includes one year of kindergarten (see Table 1). Most communities offer schooling for the compulsory years locally. A very low percentage of the students have to leave their home communities for schooling before the age of fifteen.

While the Home Rule Parliament of Greenland sets the legal framework for the schools, the supplementary regulations are matters for the municipal authorities to develop.

Languages

The regulations mentioned earlier require that Greenlandic shall be the teaching language in the schools and that Danish will be the first foreign language. Because of the larger number of Danish-speaking teachers and the amount of teaching materials in the Danish language, it still often becomes the teaching language.

Danish can be taught in the preparatory school, but does not become a compulsory subject until the fourth grade. English can be taught, starting in the seventh, eighth, or ninth grade, with other electives like German or Latin offered but not required.

## Examinations

A student wishing to leave school after grade 11 can take examinations in the subject areas of Greenlandic, Danish, arithmetic/mathematics, physics/chemistry, German, French, and Latin after the school leaving examination level.

The extended school leaving examinations can be taken in the same subjects minus French and Latin after the 12th or 13th class.

The levels and academic requirements of these examinations are equivalent to those of the Danish schools--showing a close working relationship between the two systems.

Provisional curricula guidelines are offered for all subjects taught in the schools. These guidelines are carried over from activities in the 1970s and are in need of revision or further development.

## Teaching Material

A majority of the textbooks in Greenland's schools are printed in Denmark, but the Home Rule Government's publishing house, Pilersuiffik, is producing and printing more and more of the teaching materials used in the schools, especially in the subject areas of Greenlandic, Danish, mathematics, and social studies.

## Boarding Schools

Even though the goal is to provide schooling for students in their local communities, a little more than 5 percent of the

student population in Greenland find it necessary to attend boarding schools.

The Teachers

There are three categories of teachers working in the Greenland schools:

(1) There are Greenlanders who have graduated from Ilinniarfissuaq/Greenland Teacher Training College or from Danish colleges in Denmark.

(2) There are Danish teachers who have been appointed to teach for varying periods of time.

(3) There are a number of Greenlandic substitute teachers with a combination of real life living experiences and a few fundamental courses in education and subject area content.

There are about 950 teaching positions in Greenland. Some 350 teachers are trained in Greenland; these and more than 300 Greenlandic substitute teachers cover about 550 teaching positions. Danish teachers are used for the remaining 400 positions.

In 1985, about 600 of the teaching positions were occupied by people that did not speak the home language of the students or by undertrained and unqualified substitute teachers. Using the traditional teacher training programs available in Greenland, the needs for Greenlandic-speaking or trained teachers may not be met for several decades. Because of the need, supplemental programs are planned for training kindergarten teachers as well as special program offerings for substitute teachers that cover essential parts of the normal teacher training curriculum.

TABLE 2

SCHOOLING IN DENMARK

| | Within the Compulsory School Age | Beyond the Compulsory School Age | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1961-62 | 026 | - | 026 |
| 1962-63 | 026 | - | 026 |
| 1963-64 | 026 | - | 026 |
| 1964-65 | 053 | - | 053 |
| 1965-66 | 130 | 150 | 280 |
| 1966-67 | 230 | 301 | 531 |
| 1967-68 | 177 | 330 | 507 |
| 1968-69 | 184 | 405 | 589 |
| 1969-70 | 199 | 396 | 595 |
| 1970-71 | 212 | 588 | 800 |
| 1971-72 | 280 | 603 | 883 |
| 1972-73 | 253 | 792 | 1045 |
| 1973-74 | 204 | 737 | 941 |
| 1974-75 | 122 | 655 | 777 |
| 1975-76 | 109 | 530 | 639 |
| 1976-77 | 21 | 422 | 443 |
| 1977-78 | - | 568 | 568 |
| 1978-79 | - | 398 | 398 |
| 1979-80 | - | 339 | 339 |
| 1980-81 | - | 278 | 278 |
| 1981-82 | - | 191 | 191 |
| 1982-83 | - | 189 | 189 |
| 1983-84 | - | 138 | 138 |
| 1984-85 | - | 78 | 78 |

The above table shows the number of students that were sent to school in Denmark during the years between 1961-1984. It also shows a remarkable shift in attitudes and their resulting priorities during those years. In the late fifties, the absence of

Greenlandic-speaking teachers became noticeable all over Greenland. Part of the cause was that the vast investment in medical care and housing after the second world war had paid off, and the population literally exploded. A primary result was a lack of educated Greenlanders in every profession. This was especially noticeable in the school system. Growing numbers of Danish teachers were called to Greenland to teach.

They were, of course, not successful in working with the local populations because of a natural lack of understanding between the two groups. In an effort to help solve this problem, Greenlandic youngsters were given an opportunity to spend a year in Denmark trying to help students acculturate somewhat to the foreign teachers and system of education. Hundreds of foster parents volunteered to host a Greenlandic child. In many ways the program was a success. But too often it caused an identity crisis among students, with a resulting conflict between parents and their children.

A national/political consciousness began growing with the realization that, though the program had its virtues, the human costs to individuals and families were too high. In the 1976-77 school year, the last 21 young students of compulsory school age were sent to Denmark. A few years later the decrease in the number of students beyond compulsory school age attending school in Denmark began. Currently, only 40 some students are attending school in Denmark, not for the old reasons of acculturation, but for other kinds of personal reasons.

The development through two decades is a remarkable illustration of the kind of trap created by solutions that look like creative problem solving. The situation also illustrates the enormous flexibility of both Greenland and Denmark in making educational policy when practical problems become overwhelming.

The fast decline in the numbers of students going to Denmark during the last decade is also a reflection of the significant economic investment in school facilities in Greenland.

The Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, under the Home Rule Government, is also supervising and financing several educational activities outside of just elementary and secondary schooling.

Higher Preparatory Examination (HF)

A two-year course, above the extended school leaving examinations, is offered on a full-time basis at two communities in Greenland (Nuuk and Aasiaat). This higher preparatory examination (HF) provides entry to colleges and universities and is considered equivalent to the Danish HF. In the United States, the HF could be compared to the junior college degree.

Two-thirds of the young people reaching this level of study are offered their HF in Greenland. The number of graduates at this level totals between 80 and 90 students annually. About 130 enter each year. There are several cities that offer the HF courses in a number of subject areas according to local needs and availability of qualified teachers.

Teacher Training

Teacher training has been taking place in Greenland since 1845. During the 1960s, a teacher training literally equivalent to the Danish model was introduced in Greenland. Graduates from the Ilinniarfissuaq/Gronlands Seminarium were at that time accepted for employment at Danish schools without any further examinations.

The present teacher training act, passed in 1979, is based on the higher preparatory examination (HF). The academic level is at the same level as in the previous training programs. The

main change lies in a better adjustment to the needs of the Greenlandic population.

The training of teachers lasts four years, with one year spent in practice teaching, combined with theoretical assignments during the practice year. The teacher training program, however, has not been able to compete with other training programs because the teaching salaries have dropped behind increased wages in other professions. The result is a decrease in the number of applications for teacher training. To attract more applicants, the politicians have shortened the teacher training by one year on a three-year trial basis.

Other Training Opportunities

In 1984 a handful of students started a five-year education program to prepare for the ministry of the Greenland church. They expect to accept five students each year.

In February 1984 ten students began their studies at Ilisimatusarfik (the Inuit Institute) in Nuuk. The level is comparable to a four-year bachelor degree. The subjects taught are Greenlandic, Inuit languages, Inuit culture, and social sciences. In addition, the Ilisimatusarfik is a research institute where the first responsibility is to develop a Greenlandic dictionary with references to Danish, English, and other Inuit languages. The annual number of students entering the program is set at ten.

The Knud Rasmussens Folk High School in Sisimiut was founded some twenty years ago. For the last five years or so, it has had a special branch called the Women's Folk High School. The capacity is sixty students.

Sulisartut Hojskoliat/Workers' Folk High School, located in Qaqortoq, is conducting normal folk high school activities and is also training worker representatives from all over Greenland. It

is run and owned by SIK, The Workers' Association. Its capacity is forty students.

Eqqumiitsuliornermut Atuarfik/The School of Arts offers 8-month courses for artistically gifted persons each year. The content of the courses varies according to the guest teacher's field and the interest of the students. The subjects can be graphics of several kinds, painting, stone cutting, and carving.

Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa, Radio Greenland (KNR), has twenty sound engineers among its employees. All of these are trained at KNR in cooperation with Denmark's Radio. Of this group, ten are trainees going through their three-year training program.

Vocational Training

Vocational training in Greenland is based on Regulation nr. 4 of October 24, 1979. This vocational training provides for student allowances from public funds and vocational guidance.

This regulation is administered by The Training Inspectorate who works under the political body of the Vocational Training Council. The Council represents the Home Rule Parliament; the workers; the fishermen's, hunters', and employers' associations; and the Standing Committee on Public Wage and Salaries.

Each school under this department has its own Branch Committee. The committee receives its representation from the organizations receiving students from the school as well as a member appointed politically.

Niuernermik Ilinniarfik - The Business School

The business school, with two branches in Greenland (in Nuuk and Qaqortoq) and one in Denmark, is by far the largest school among the vocational schools in terms of student body.

The structure of the training utilizes the Danish vocational training model EFG (Erhvervsfaglig Grunduddannelse=vocational basic training), based on a combination of a basic one-year training session combined with alternating practice and further theoretical training within the trade.

This year 95 trainees were admitted to the schools of Nuuk and Qaqortoq. In Denmark 110 trainees were admitted. A gradual transfer of the school in Denmark to Greenland is in progress. The trainees can major within three fields: administration, production, and commerce.

A special field within this school is the interpreter's department offering two years of training which qualifies an individual for jobs within the public and service areas as translators from Greenlandic to Danish and vice versa.

The Journalist Training

Since 1982 the training of journalists has been offered through a cooperative effort between Niuernermik Ilinniarfik and Ilisimatusarfik/The Inuit Institute. The training is built upon interchanging units of theoretical parts and practice periods.

The Metal Workers' School in Nuuk

This school offers training within several streams: motor mechanics, aircraft mechanics, locksmiths, shipbuilders, and engine fitters who are trained in Greenland. Electricians, electrical engineers, and shipwrights still have to go to Denmark for their training. These programs are all administered under the EFG model. Every year 88 trainees are admitted in Greenland, about 35 in Denmark.

The Building and Construction Workers' School in Sisimiut

Covers the training within the fields of plumbing, carpentry, painting, ship carpentering and construction. Joiners, bricklayers, masons, and glazers have to go to Denmark for their training.

The model of training here too is that of the EFG. About 110 trainees are accepted annually at the school in Sisimiut, while about 30 trainees are sent to Denmark.

The Nautical School in Nuuk

The navigations school in Nuuk, with a sub-department in Ilulissat, is offering Fishing Master's certificates of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade and the Home-trade Master's certificate of 1st and 2nd grade. The school also offers the Coastal Skipper's certificate for the yachting people.

The Social Workers' School in Nuuk

The school offers training for kindergarten teachers, children's nurses, and social workers of different kinds.

Other Vocational Training

Within the last few years other more practice-oriented training has been provided. Fundamental training for young people who want to become fishermen, seamen, and hunters as well as a school for workers in the fishing industry are in the developmental stage.

In the southern part of Greenland, a small scaled training opportunity for sheep farmers has been run by the experimental sheep and agricultural farm near Qaqortoq in cooperation with sheep farmers in Iceland. Every year five to six young people start this training.

Within the health service sector, which is taken care of by the Danish state, a number of health assistants and dental assistants are trained every year.

Two finance houses are offering schooling for their young employees through a special agreement with the Niuernermik Ilinniarfik (The Business School).

The Greenland Technical Organization (GTO), run by the Danish Ministry of Greenland, offers training of their operators and technicians within the field of telecommunications, as the police, under the Danish Ministry of Justice, take care of the training of the local police force.

THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE GREENLAND SCHOOL

| | Within the Compulsory School Age | Beyond Compulsory School Age | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1965/66 | 7360 | 720 | 8080 |
| 1966/67 | 8185 | 812 | 8997 |
| 1967/68 | 8750 | 1030 | 9780 |
| 1968/69 | 9407 | 1339 | 10746 |
| 1969/70 | 9557 | 1450 | 11007 |
| 1970/71 | 10250 | 1770 | 12020 |
| 1971/72 | 11072 | 2034 | 13106 |
| 1972/73 | 11178 | 2344 | 13522 |
| 1973/74 | 11750 | 2610 | 14360 |
| 1974/75 | 11590 | 2850 | 14440 |
| 1975/76 | 11250 | 3030 | 14280 |
| 1976/77 | 10850 | 3220 | 14070 |
| 1977/78 | 10080 | 3204 | 13284 |
| 1978/79 | 9440 | 3450 | 12890 |
| 1979/80* | 8765 | 3490 | 12255 |
| 1980/81 | 9349 | 2465 | 11814 |
| 1981/82 | 8574 | 2573 | 11147 |
| 1982/83 | 8026 | 2642 | 10668 |
| 1983/84 | 7558 | 2711 | 10269 |

* The compulsory school age rose by one year.

THE POPULATION OF GREENLAND

JANUARY 1, 1983

The total population's distribution on municipalities, sex, and place of birth.

| | Total | Men | Women | Born in Greenland | Born Outside Greenland |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nanortalik | 2886 | 1535 | 1361 | 2586 | 300 |
| Qaqortoq | 3159 | 1675 | 1484 | 2647 | 512 |
| Narsaq | 2147 | 1132 | 1015 | 1781 | 366 |
| Ivittuut | 38 | 28 | 10 | 6 | 32 |
| Paamiut | 2807 | 1491 | 1316 | 2464 | 343 |
| Nuuk | 10335 | 5614 | 4721 | 7144 | 3191 |
| Maniitsoq | 4053 | 2206 | 1847 | 3521 | 532 |
| Sisimiut | 4509 | 2481 | 2028 | 3798 | 711 |
| Kangaatsiaq | 1207 | 631 | 576 | 1148 | 59 |
| Aasiaat | 3481 | 1835 | 1646 | 3055 | 426 |
| Qasigiannguit | 1874 | 979 | 895 | 1701 | 173 |
| Ilulissat | 4182 | 2320 | 1962 | 3799 | 483 |
| Qeqertarsuaq | 1025 | 527 | 498 | 926 | 99 |
| Uummannaq | 2566 | 1434 | 1132 | 2282 | 284 |
| Upernavik | 2147 | 1130 | 1017 | 2033 | 114 |
| Avanerssuaq | 795 | 411 | 384 | 735 | 60 |
| Tasiilaq | 2754 | 1408 | 1346 | 2513 | 241 |
| Illoqqortoormiit | 509 | 259 | 250 | 457 | 52 |
| Outside municipalities | 1329 | 1086 | 2243 | 73 | 1313 |
| Totals | 51903 | 28172 | 23731 | 42669 | 9234 |

## Politics

The Siumut party started, in the beginning of the 70s, as a result of a rapidly growing movement protesting the Danish policy in Greenland and demanding Greenlandic influence in the development of policies affecting Greenland. The movement recognized the task of organizing people who wanted a hand in the development of Greenlandic policies. The initial spokesmen of the movement have been dominating the political field up to today. The main spokesmen from the beginning, Jonathan Motzfeldt, Moses Olsen, and Lars Emil Johansen, are all members of the home rule government. In 1977 the movement became a political party. Its ideological platform is a combination of strong nationalism combined with social consciousness. The party recommends public management centrally as well as locally through private initiative. The party has been very active in the process of withdrawing from the EEC. The Siumut party dominates the political arena in Greenland and has the majority in the government.

The Atassut party: the Siumut movement literally forced the moderate, politically oriented people to organize themselves. People who were not critical of the Danish policy gathered around people like Lars Chemnitz and Otto Steenholdt who founded the party in 1978. The Atassut and the Siumut parties are nearly the same size. The Atassut seems to represent a broad variety of interests and policies from socially oriented centrists to the extreme rightwings. The party recommends a private development trade and was the only party fighting for retention within the EEC. Since the introduction of home rule in 1979, the party has been in opposition.

The Inuit Ataqatigiit separated from the Siumut after the Siumut politicians had to compromise on the issue of Greenlandic title to the unrenewable resources. Young active Siumut politicians formed in protest a group to prepare the foundation of a political party demanding an independent Greenland, claiming that the home rule was a compromise. Today, home rule has been

accepted, and after some years with a strong critical attitude towards Siumut for being too permissive, the IA and the Siumut have united in a coalition government where IA holds two seats of seven. Ideologically, the IA is to the left of Siumut.

The distribution at the last two elections:

| | Atassut | | Inuit Ataqatigiit | | Siumut | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1983 | 1984 | 1983 | 1984 | 1983 | 1984 |
| South const. | 2186 | 1942 | 517 | 673 | 2670 | 2484 |
| Cent. -O- | 4862 | 4069 | 1194 | 1137 | 3668 | 3591 |
| Disk. -O- | 2760 | 2327 | 779 | 724 | 1946 | 2018 |
| North. const. | 973 | 849 | 122 | 174 | 1438 | 1226 |
| East. const. | 662 | 662 | - | - | 649 | 627 |
| Totals | 11443 | 9849 | 2612 | 2708 | 10371 | 9946 |

To the Landsting (the Parliament) were elected eleven members for Atassut, three members for Inuit Ataqatigiit, and eleven for Siumut.

A coalition government was founded between the Siumut and Inuit Ataqatigiit parties, with five seats to Siumut and two seats to Inuit Ataqatigiit.

Greenland has two seats in the Danish Parliament; the parties Atassut and Siumut have one MP seat each.

List of Addresses and Phone Numbers

The schools and institutions in this alphabetic list are named by their Greenlandic or Danish names; in parenthesis is the explanatory translation.

ATASSUT (political party), P.O. Box 399, 3900 Nuuk - phone 2 33 66

BYGGE - OG ANLAEGSSKOLEN (Building/Construction School), P.O. Box 1001, 3911 Sisimiut - phone 1 44 88

FISKERIFAGSKOLEN (Fishermen's School), P.O. Box 198, 3940 Paamiut, phone 1 73 60

NIUERNERMIK ILINNIARFIK (Business School), P.O. Box 431, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 30 99

GRONLANDS HJEMMESTYRE (Home Rule Government), P.O. Box 1015, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 30 00

GRONLANDS HJEMMESTYRE, Danmarkskontoret (Home Rule Office, Denmark), Sjaeleboderne 2, 1122, Copenhagen, Denmark, phone (01) 13 42 24

ILINNIARFFISSUAQ (Teacher Training College), P.O. Box 1026, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 2 11 90

INUIT ATAQATIGIIT (political party), P.O. Box 321, 3900 Nuuk, phone 23702

INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR CONFERENCE, P.O. Box 204, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 36 32

ILISIMATUSARFIK (Inuit Institute), P.O. Box 279, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 45 66

JERN-OG METALSKOLEN (Metal Workers' School), P.O. Box 29, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 12 68

KALAALLIT NUNAATA RADIOA (Radio Greenland), P.O. Box 1007, 3900 Nuuk, phone 21172

KNUD RASMUSSENS HOJSKOLE (Folk High School), P.O. Box 1008, 3911 Sisimiut, phone 1 40 32

KULTUR-OG UNDERVISNINGSDIREKTORATET (Dept. for Culture and Education), P.O. Box 1029, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 30 00

KUNSTSKOLEN (School of Arts), P.O. Box 286, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 26 44

LANDSBIBLIOTEKET (Central Library), P.O. Box 1011, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 11 56

NUUK TURISTFORENING (tourist bureau), P.O. Box 199, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 27 00

PILERSUIFFIK (publishing house), P.O. Box 110, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 15 02

SIUMUT (political party), P.O. Box 357, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 20 77

SKIPPERSKOLEN (Nautical School), P.O. Box 180, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 21 99

SOCIALPAEDAGOGISK SKOLE (Social Workers' School) P.O. Box 209, 3900 Nuuk, phone 2 20 99

SULISARTUT HOJSKOLIAT (Workers' Folk High School), P.O. Box 132, 3920 Qaqortoq, phone 3 84 66

# EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NATIVE CANADIAN

Mary Cousins

Canada is one of the largest countries in the world and is divided into twelve smaller political units, ten provinces, and two large northern units--territories. In all these units reside Native Canadians, Inuit, Status Indians, Non-Status Indians, and Metis. There are between 25,000 and 30,000 Inuit in Canada and several hundreds of thousands of Natives in the other three categories.

Education is a provincial or territorial responsibility within Canada, thus a variety of educational systems, philosophies, and realities exist throughout the country. The federal government, however, assumes special responsibilities for Native Canadians (we have a federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development), so education is directly affected by at least two levels of government.

In this paper I would like to deal specifically with educational opportunities for the Inuit and, even more specifically, with Inuit residing in the Northwest Territories of Canada. Some references will be made to two other Native groups and southern regions of the country. My area of concern includes the MacKenzie Delta, the Arctic Coast, the High Arctic, the Keewatin, and the Baffin regions. It might be noted that a significant number of Inuit also live in the northern areas of the province of Quebec and in Labrador (on the extreme east coast of Canada and part of the province of Newfoundland).

In the geographic area I have described, Inuit form the great majority of the population, and Inuktitut is the primary language. For administration purposes the Northwest Territories are divided into regions: Inuit live in four of these regions with administration centers in Inuvik, Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, and Frobisher Bay. Each center has an education staff headed by an education superintendent, providing services to the whole region.

There are approximately forty communities in the Inuit regions. (There are a few permanent "camps" and many temporary/seasonal camps throughout.) There may be as many as 20,000 Inuit in the area concerned.

Every community has a school, about four communities have secondary schools, and about ten communities have adult education centers. Community college extension courses are provided from time to time.

Now that you know a bit about my "world," what, educationally, happens in it?

Let's look at the fictional Looseeoosee family. Looseeoosee, the father, is 45 years of age; his wife, Oodlooreak, is 43; daughters Mary, Annie, and Martha are 23, 16, and 7; sons Michael and Peter are 19 and 12. What are the educational opportunities for these Native Canadians?

Looseeoosee is unilingual (Inuktitut) with a smattering of English picked up on construction sites and from the steady stream of Kadlunat public employees who come and go.

He is employed as a maintenance man with the local housing association and is slowly making his way through an apprenticeship program. This program consists of four years of on-the-job and theory courses leading to a journeyman certificate in maintenance of buildings. This training (education) is a cooperative effort provided by his employer (the local housing association), the Territorial Department of Education, the Arctic College (a child of the Territorial government), and the federal Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. Most (if not all) of these organizations are staffed by southerners, but theory training is usually carried out through an interpreter. During the winter evenings, Looseeoosee can attend short courses in subjects such as English, small engine repair, etc., planned by the local adult education center.

Looseeoosee graduated many years earlier from Inuktitut School, a nonformal schooling provided by father, grandfather, uncles, etc. Looseeoosee is now a part-time, nonpaid teacher of Inuktitut, as were many others for centuries.

Oodlooreak is a unilingual (Inuktitut) Inuk who attended a Roman Catholic operated school (no longer in existence) from the age of 10 to 16. Like her husband, she reads and writes the syllabic form of Inuktitut writing, most of which was (and is) taught through the churches. She has used little or no English for years. She takes advantage of homemaking courses offered by the local adult education center and health and nutrition courses offered by the local nursing station. She has travelled to the region's administrative center twice for week-long courses/information sessions on local government and local control of education.

The twenty-three-year-old daughter, Mary, attended school in her small community for about eight years (since she was six years old), and all instruction was in English. At the age of twenty, she was employed by the community school as a teacher's aide, and for the past three years, she has taken teacher's aide (or classroom assistant) inservice training each summer.

Michael and Annie survived nine years of education in the English community school and are now in the eleventh and eighth grades, respectively; they are 19 and 16 years of age. They attend a residential secondary school in a regional center. Both are literate in English and they are bilingual. One of eight subjects taken at school is Inuktitut, using both the syllabic and new orthography systems of writing.

Twelve-year-old Peter is at a grade four level in the community school; at the age of 6 and 7, he was educated in Inuktitut (with English as a second language). He is at a northern grade four and is now progressing toward a southern equivalent grade four!!

Martha is 7. Her education has been totally in Inuktitut for the past two years and will continue to be for the next year. She is fluent in Inuktitut; at this point, her command of English is limited.

I will not attempt to describe the educational opportunities available to the Looseeoosee family. However, what might be described as an "educational opportunity" for some may not be for others. Almost all education developments in Canada's north have been initiated and operated by southern Canadians. Many northern Native people do not see educational institutions and programs as their own. Consequently, a significant number of Inuit would not consider "foreign"-dominated educational services acceptable opportunities. Despite some moves toward local control of education, Inuit (and Native people in Canada in general) today do not "run the schools."

Local Education Authorities

In the Northwest Territories of Canada, territorial legislation has allowed the creation of education authorities which give each community an opportunity to make decisions. There are several different levels of LEA--committee, society, and board; the higher up you go, the more decisions you can make. It is within this context that Inuit can have a direct effect on the education system, but much through "advising" the government.

Divisional School Boards

This is a new invention. Apparently, it provides the local education authorities an opportunity to "band together" to make some educational decisions on a regional basis. It is a little early to tell what effect divisional boards will have.

## Elementary Education

Every Native Canadian (as with all Canadians) who lives in defined communities has the opportunity to attend local schools that provide education for grade levels one to eight. In some communities (mostly in the North), schooling is provided in the Native language for the first three years. Many of these schools have programs of English As A Second Language. In communities where there is a significant Native and non-Native population, there are parallel classes, with one in English.

## Secondary Education

Some larger Native communities in the Canadian north have schools with grade levels up to ten. Generally, however, pupils must travel to the nearest administrative center for schooling beyond grade eight and enter residential high schools. These schools offer some Inuktitut language courses, "on-the-land" training, and special northern sewing and settlement maintenance programs. The straight academic program is that followed by the southern province of Alberta.

High schools are staffed by qualified southern teachers (primarily), and a small percentage of Native people complete senior matriculation (completion of twelfth grade).

## Adult Education Centers

About 50 percent of the communities in the Canadian Arctic have adult education centers--multi-purpose educational facilities that provide a variety of services. Each center usually has a staff of two (full time) and hires "contract" instructors from time to time. Services include language classes, general academic upgrading, community development programs, information production, and a variety of short courses. These centers have a bilingual capability, are general meeting places, and are very well utilized.

Community Colleges (Arctic Colleges)

Northerners who wish to take specialized courses of a vocational nature have, until recently, been able to attend one such institute based in the extreme southwest part of the Northwest Territories. Two additional colleges are planned for the MacKenzie Delta and the Baffin Region of the NWT.

A rough time frame for these institutions is as follows:

Elementary Schools - 1960s
Secondary Schools - 1970s
Adult Education - 1960s
Community College - 1970s

Local education authorities were introduced in the 1970s, and divisional boards are being introduced in the 1980s.

Advanced Education

For a long time, a primary concern of the white, southern educators and other government officials dealing with the north was "getting Inuit into university." The first Inuk doctor and the first Inuk lawyer were hailed as "the successful products of Canadian Native education." Even today, the number of northern Native people in universities is seen as a measure of northern education effectiveness.

All universities in Canada are in the provinces. Some universities such as Saskatchewan, Alberta, Western (London, Ont.), and McGill (Montreal) have specialized courses designed to accommodate Native Canadians. In some cases, entrance requirements are changed to allow northern Native people access to universities; some universities operate extension courses in the north.

Teacher Training

A cooperative venture, Arctic Colleges and Southern Universities, has recently developed a teacher education program that (1) recognizes the abilities of northern Native people to teach and (2) is now providing Native teachers for work in the north, utilizing the Native language.

A paper on educational opportunities for the Native Canadian would not be complete without comment regarding education "outside" the school system. Thousands of Inuit in the Arctic have received training by the Anglican and Catholic churches, local government officials, the Interpreter Corps, the Department of Public Works, and private employers.

Through this training (supported by some educational institutions), Native Canadians have contributed greatly in their own society as tradesmen, government officials (local and regional), religious leaders, interpreter translators, etc.

A paper on educational opportunities for the Canadian Native would not be complete without a quick review of the severe shortcomings as seen by the Inuit:

(1) The southern domination of Native education is unacceptable.

(2) The emphasis on our two official languages (English and French) without recognition of the Inuktitut language is unacceptable.

(3) The lack of Inuit involvement in and support of the present educational system is a symptom that must be recognized and dealt with.

(4) Any new and effective educational system must recognize that the Native northern societies have different values

than those in the south and that the Native relationship with nature (the land and the animals) is significantly different than the non-Natives.

Today in Canada there is a national debate going on regarding the entrenchment of Native rights within our new constitution and the establishment of self-government for Canada's Native people. Only when these have been attained will educational opportunities be improved for Native Canadians.

# EDUCATION OF MINORITY PEOPLES IN NORTHERN USSR

Terence Armstrong

## Introduction

The task of writing on this subject should be carried out by someone with personal experience in the school system in the Soviet north. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union does not seem disposed to send us such a person, and I know of no one in the west who has that experience. Therefore, we will have to fall back on what is very much a second-best, an impression of the system gained from the published literature. We must bear in mind, therefore, that the descriptions which follow may be more closely related to what ought to happen than to the reality of what is happening.

The most up-to-date material is a collection of articles published in 1981[1], covering many topics in education in the north. This will be our main source. In considering it, I have tried to single out points which are particularly relevant in the west also, and, accordingly, I propose to group my comments under the headings of General School Statistics, Language Issue, Teacher Training, Curriculum, Boarding Schools, Higher Education, and Local Control.

The area to be considered is what is known in the Soviet literature as "The Soviet North"; it is about half the country. Its minority peoples[2] include three relatively large groups--Yakuty (328,000), Komi (327,000), Karely (138,000), and 22 smaller groups known as "the small peoples of the north" and numbering in the aggregate 158,000. The Soviet North includes within its ten minority-oriented administrative subdivisions three Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (Komi, Yakuty, Karely) and seven Autonomous Districts (Nentsy, Yamalo-Nentsy, Khanty-Mansi, Dolgano-Nentsy, Evenki, Chukchi, Koryak). Its total population is about 6.9 million, of whom 950,000 are natives (1979 census figures).

The economic importance of this area is great. In very rough terms, the Soviet North produces the following proportion of the country's total production: diamonds, 100%; gold, 55%; nickel, 65%; tin, 50%; oil, 65%; and gas, 55%. The industrial future of the country is thus closely bound up with northern development.

A danger to be guarded against is that of lumping together all the minority peoples of the Soviet North and treating them as a single coherent whole. In fact, there are great cultural differences between the various peoples, who range from the relatively numerous, sophisticated, and well-educated Komi and Yakuty to the numerically tiny Kety and Nganasany. Soviet officialdom does, in fact, put the three larger peoples into a separate group by virtue of their belonging to Autonomous Republics.

If there are cultural differences between the various northern peoples, there are still greater ones between them and the major minorities in the Soviet Union. Thus, another danger to be guarded against is that of regarding the northern peoples as typical of all Soviet minorities. Much of the writing about Soviet minorities is focused on the very different problems of the Ukrainians, Georgians, Uzbeks, and so on.

General School Statistics

Figures for the total school population and numbers of teachers over the whole territory of the Soviet North are not issued, the Soviet North not being a statistical or demographic unit. It is possible only to present some figures for certain territorial subdivisions. These are shown in the table on the following page.

Language Issue

Since some of the languages spoken in the Soviet North really break down into related and competing dialects, there are at least

| Area | Date | No. of Schools | No. of Children At School | Of Whom Natives | No. of Children At Pre-School | No. of Teachers (All Grades) | Of Whom Natives | Total Pop. of Area (1979) | Of Whom Natives (approx.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Karelian ASSR | 1980-81 | 321 | 100,000 | | 63,000 | | | 736,000 | 80,000 |
| Komi ASSR | 1980-81 | 535 | 162,000 | | 103,000 | | | 1,118,000 | 280,000 |
| Yakut ASSR | 1980-81 | 596 | 159,000 | | 56,000 (1975) | 11,100 (1975) | | 839,000 | 330,000 |
| Nentsy AD | 1976-77 | | 8,600 | | 3,800 | | | 47,000 | 11,000 |
| Dolgano-Nentsy AD | 1976-77 | | 8,700 | | 3,100 | | | 44,000 | 8,000 |
| Yamalo-Nentsy AD | 1976-77 | 195 | 24,000 | 17,200 | 7,900 | | | 158,000 | 31,000 |
| Evenki AD | 1976-77 | | 3,600 | | 1,500 | 6,000 (1969) | 1,500 (1969) | 16,000 | 4,000 |
| Khanty-Mansi AD | c. 1979 | 197 | 89,000 | 4,800 | 40,000 | | | 569,000 | 24,000 |
| Chukchi AD | c. 1979 | 38 | 25,000 | 3,300 | 12,000 | 650 | | 133,000 | 12,600 |
| Koryak AD | c. 1979 | 33 | 7,000 | 1,200 | 3,000 | | | 34,000 | 8,200 |
| Nanay Region | 1977-78 | 21 | 3,600 | | | 280 | 54 | | |

ASSR = Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic AD = Autonomous District

These figures are drawn from a number of different sources and present several internal inconsistencies. They should not be taken as more than a very general guide.


S.A. Chekhoyeva and G. A. Baryshev, comps. Prosveshcheniye na kraynem severe. Sbornik 19, 1981, pp. 41, 49, 54, 63.

I.S. Gurvich. Polveka avtonomii narodnostey severa. Sovetskaya Etnografiya, 1980, No. 6, pp. 13-14.

Itogi vsesoyuznoy perepisi naseleniya 1970 g., Tom 4, 1973, Table 6.

Narodnoye khozyaystvo RSFSR v 1980 g., 1981, pp. 318-21.

Narodnoye khozyaystvo RSFSR v 1980 g., 1983, pp. 265-77.

Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSRR za 60 let, 1977, p. 598.

Narodnoye khozyaystvo Yakutskoy ASSR, 1976, p. 138.

Naseleniye SSRR po dannym Vsesoyuznoy perepisi naseleniya 1979 g., 1980, pp. 24-26.

V.N. Uvachan, Narody severa v usloviyakh razvitogo sotsializma, 1977, p. 67.

as many languages as peoples. From the beginning, the Soviet regime has placed much emphasis on the language issue. We may consider two aspects: first, the scholarly work which went into the introduction of written forms of the languages and subsequent research into their structure; and second, the importance attached to the use of the native language in the education process.

Linguistic Research: Lunacharskiy, the first "Commissar for Enlightenment" (or Minister of Education) of the Soviet state, laid down that teaching ought to be in the native language, even if for practical reasons it could not be yet. By 1932 a written form had been provided for 16 languages. It had already existed for Yakuty and Komi, the two biggest groups. The alphabet used at first was based on the Roman, but was replaced in 1937 by one based on Cyrillic, in order to facilitate the link with Russian and to ease admission of loanwords. The written form did not flourish in the case of all 16 languages. Karelian, Itel'men, and Saami were apparently discontinued (though different dialects of Saami flourished in Scandinavia). A Soviet writer noted in 1978 that four languages, Nivkh, Sel'kup, Khanty, and Koryak, were represented only by ABCs.[3] Fourteen seems to be the total in current use, but there is some confusion about the status of certain languages, and one recent source[4] lists only eleven as being "published with success"--Nentsy, Mansi, Evenki, Eveny, Chukchi, Koryak, Eskimo, Khanty, and Nanay, plus Yakut and Komi. The same source hints, however, that efforts are being made to fill the gaps.

The linguistic work behind all this was very great. It centered at first in the Institute of Peoples of the North in Leningrad, set up in 1930 but dissolved in 1941, and at the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and then at teacher training institutes in Leningrad (the Herzen Pedagogical Institute) and Khabarovsk. From 1962 the Institute of History, Philology and Philosophy at Novosibirsk was also involved and took the initiative in fostering study by school teachers all over the north. This linguistic work is continuing

today, although the vital pioneering period, when most of the languages were first set down in writing, was largely over by the 1950s.

Many major scholars took part in the work: V.G. Bogoraz, V.A. Avrorin, V.T. Tsintsius, P.Ya. Skorik, Ye.S. Rubtsova, G.M. Vasilevich. Academician I.I. Meshchaninov played an important role as Director of the Institute of Linguistics. These were all Russians, but native linguists also made important contributions: S.N. Onenki (Nanay), V.A. Robbek and V.D. Lebedev (Even), G.N. Kurilov (Yukagir), A.N Myreyeva and T.Ye. Andreyeva (Evenki), P.I. Inenlikey (Chukchi), Ye.I. Rombandeyeva and M.P Balandin (Mansi), M.Ya. Barmich (Nentsy), N.I. Tereshkin (Khanty) and Ch.M. Taksami (Nivkhi).

Use of native language in schools: Lunacharskiy's remark already quoted shows the original view. As trained native teachers began to appear in the 1930s, it became possible little by little to use the native language as the language of instruction. But after some years, the pendulum swung and the value of retaining Russian was stressed. The change in alphabet was part of this swing. It seems to have arisen out of a surge of Russian nationalism linked to the "socialism-in-one-country" idea. But it was generally presented as the way of admitting the natives to Russian, and thence to world culture. This swing aroused some fears outside the USSR that the long-term objective was total russification.[5] But in the last twenty years or so there seems to have been a return to recognition of the importance of the native languages.

This apparent revival of interest in the use of northern languages is worth examining in greater detail. A recent writer[6] states that "today in the schools of the far north much is being done to improve teaching of the native language." He goes on: "in the education of children and young people of the far north it is necessary to take into account ethnic and other features of the peoples of the far north, life conditions of

children and parents, and the achievements of national pedagogies." Maximum account must be taken of the progressive achievements of their material and spiritual culture; peoples must be proud of their origins. These are all reasons for stressing the native language. Another is that too many children were coming to school with a weak knowledge of their own language, and this was seen as promoting a generation gap which was unwelcome.[7] A more pragmatic reason is that the native language is seen as the key to learning Russian.[8] How can a child learn a new language without knowing what the structure of language is? The same point is made by a Komi, N.A. Kolegova, who pushes the argument a little further: there should not be too many Russian loanwords in the native language, for it is (in this case) the Komi language which must be studied, and not an invented Komi-Russian jargon.[9]

Soviet linguists were clearly exercised on this whole issue. Two of them, writing on Evenki-Russian bilingualism, were concerned that the right balance between Russian and the native language should be struck. Evenki, in the schools they were considering, had been the language of instruction for the first four years of schooling in the 1930s. This then dropped to preschool class only, and Russian replaced Evenki, which continued as a subject taught. Apparently there had not been enough Russian to equip the children for life in the USSR. But Evenki was then increased from 1955, and again in 1970. The importance of developing an Evenki literary language was stressed. What the article does make quite clear is that there is real concern that both Evenki and Russian should have their proper place. The aim seems to be universal bilingualism.[10] It appears that a major inquiry was conducted in 1967-69 under the direction of V.A. Avrorin, one of the most distinguished linguists involved in these questions. Fifty-eight thousand persons, from all northern peoples, were said to have been questioned, and the conclusion reached was that they overwhelmingly wanted to learn both Russian and their native language, the latter in order to pass it on to the next generation. This conclusion seems to have been accepted,

but it is not entirely clear to what extent it is being put into practice.

Teacher Training

The first teachers in the north under Soviet rule were Russians who had received training in native languages and had been given the opportunity to make visits of up to two years in the north. Training of native teachers started in the 1930s at six centers established in the north. The Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad, already mentioned, became the leading center, with first a Department and since 1953 a Faculty of Northern Peoples, and the sister institutes at Khabarovsk and Magadan are now the next in importance.

The present situation in the area, excluding the three Autonomous Republics, is as follows.[11] Teachers for the north are trained in eleven middle and higher teacher colleges. The teachers in senior classes (IV-X) go to the Herzen and the Khabarovsk institutes. The Herzen has an intake of 60 a year for its five-year course, and its Faculty of Northern Peoples has trained 1,000 teachers for the senior classes, most of them natives. The courses are at university level, conferring "higher education" status on their graduates, and almost all teachers of these classes have taken them. Other secondary schools and primary school teachers, music teachers, preschool teachers, and boarding school assistants train at colleges at Anadyr' (specializing in study of the Chukchi, Eskimo, and Even languages); Igarka (Evenki); Salekhard (Nentsy); Khanty-Mansiysk (Khanty, Mansi); Nar'yan-Mar (Nentsy); Petropavlovsk (Koryak); Nikolayevsk; and Aleksandrovsk. These eight centers in the north now train 500 native teachers at any given time. The trainees, and others, go out to try to interest natives in becoming teachers. Statistics indicate the probable current workings of this system: in 1978-79 the Anadyr' College had 180 pupils, of whom 77 were natives from the Chukotka region (for instance, Chukchi, Eveny, Eskimosy, Chuvantsy, Koryak).

Since its inception in 1943, this college has produced 650 primary school teachers, of whom 350 were native. The Salekhard College has produced 2,000 teachers since it started work in 1932, and the Khanty-Mansiysk College, founded the same year, has trained 3,500, of whom over 1,000 were natives. All these figures indicate that the current level of student numbers must have been achieved fairly recently, as the totals would be more if present levels had been maintained throughout the periods quoted. One may note in addition that there was pressure to increase the number of training colleges in the north--the coverage for such a vast area was thought to be too thin.[12]

While there were criticisms of the standards achieved in some of these colleges, it seems clear that they provided an adequate training within the expected Soviet framework. Thus, there were courses or seminars on communist education, ideological work, the teachings of Lenin, and the communist world view, as well as on subjects like self-teaching and use of TV and visual aids. There was also strong insistence on teachers keeping in close touch with native affairs. A teacher in a national school (a school where native children are in the majority) "should know the psychological features of native children."[13]

The number of native teachers with higher or secondary education employed in northern schools outside the three Autonomous Republics was said in 1969 to be 1,500 out of a total of 6,000,[14] perhaps not as high a proportion as might have been expected, yet very much higher than in other parts of the circumpolar north.

Curriculum

The Soviet intention in northern schooling was clearly stated by a recent writer: "Immediately after October [1917] the Communist Party had the task of melding the backward peoples into the new life, radically altering their economy, placing it on a socialist basis, and laying the foundations for establishing new

political, economic, and social relations."[15] A detailed breakdown of the northern schools curriculum which would implement these far-reaching objectives is not available, but it may be assumed that it is closely modeled on a norm applied throughout the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). It is the specifically northern features, and possibly departures from the norm, which may be of interest here. Two points have been made in recent writings. One relates to the question of practical training at school in the traditional occupations of the native population. Quite a lot of this training is evidently done, but the amount of school time devoted to practical instruction in reindeer herding was not thought to be sufficient.[16] This may not have been true everywhere, for in 1960 in the Taymyr region there was an apparently rather good program of practical instruction in the schools, and reindeer herding was mentioned in particular.[17] The second point was that links between schools and local collective farms were being fostered in the Koryak Autonomous District of northern Kamchatka. But these are details. The great achievement of Soviet education in the north has been the introduction, evidently in many places and perhaps in all, of "general secondary education," or ten-year schools.

A matter closely connected with curriculum is that of school books. As a result of the language work already mentioned, there has been a very significant publication program. Some of the textbooks have circulated in the west (one difficulty of getting hold of them is that they are not normally on sale in Soviet bookshops, being more in the nature of official literature which goes with the job). They are generally of high quality, well produced, and well illustrated. We are told that in 1971-75, 49 school books in nine languages were produced, many in color. During the current five-year plan (1981-85), books in 14 languages were planned.[18] Many natives are involved in the publishing work, and illustrators are often sent specially to the north to obtain their material. The content of these books, however, may often be a straight translation of a Russian school book.

## Boarding Schools

The boarding school (internat) idea was introduced as a way of delivering education to the scattered and nomadic groups of the north. At first there were nomadic schools, which travelled with the nomads. But these were replaced by the boarding schools. These were at first unpopular, as in the west and no doubt for the same reasons, but have apparently come to be accepted. Most of the native children are at boarding schools where most of the pupils are natives, and all their expenses are met by the state.

## Higher Education

There are at present three universities in the Soviet North, one in each of the Autonomous Republics--Karelian, Yakut, and Komi. Petrozavodsk University was founded in 1940 (6,500 students in 1974), Yakutsk University in 1956 (8,000 students in 1984), and Syktyvkar University in 1972 (11,900 students in 1977). Petrozavodsk and Yakutsk were originally teacher training colleges, a function which they continue to perform. Their purpose is to serve the inhabitants of their Republics. A plea is now made for a university of the peoples of the north (meaning the native inhabitants of the seven Autonomous Districts), which should have faculties of education, medicine, culture and arts, and practical training of reindeer herders, hunters, and fishers.[19] Other forms of higher education do, however, exist in the "small peoples" territory, giving specialized professional and technical training by evening classes and correspondence courses. Cash prizes and other incentives are offered to persons who take such courses while at work.

A large number of natives have completed higher education courses. Of the small peoples, the number graduating in 1970 varied from 3.4 per thousand of population (Nentsy in the Yamalo-Nentsy Autonomous District) to 28 per thousand (Evenki in the Evenki Autonomous District). In the Autonomous Republics the proportion is certainly higher (for Russians in the country as a

whole, it was 59). There are thus many highly qualified specialists among the northern peoples.

A center for ethnographic study of the northern peoples is Novosibirsk State University's departments of history and philology, which are linked to the Academy of Sciences' Institute of History, Philology, and Philosophy. Postgraduate work is done here, and some of the students are themselves northern natives.

## Local Control

The concept of some kind of formalized local control over education does not exist in any part of the Soviet Union. There are no school boards, school managers, or boards of governors. This does not mean, of course, that teachers may not have close contact with parents and local residents, but it must be unofficial. The whole issue of official local control is unlikely to arise, since a principal feature of the Soviet education system is its central control,[21] and there is in any case no tradition of an effective local voice in affairs of government.

## Conclusion

The education system introduced by the Soviet regime into northern areas has certainly recorded some notable successes. Savoskul[22] publishes a table showing average numbers of years schooling received by natives in the seven Autonomous Districts in 1959 and 1970. It shows in every case an advance between the two dates, generally of about one year. The Russians throughout the USSR also advanced by a year, from 5.5 to 6.7. The northern peoples were all below this level, but in some cases, the gap was relatively narrow--4.9 for Mansi, for instance. Most of the improvement was at the secondary level, but at the primary level, some northern people actually did better than the Russians.

It is clear that the Soviet introduction of education into the north has encountered many of the same problems as was the

case in the west, and may have been, on the whole, more successful in solving them. On the language issues, both linguistic research and use of native languages in school, the Soviet Union has done well. There was earlier recognition than in the west of the importance of bilingualism. On boarding schools we know too little to be able to judge. The main differences between the Soviet approach and the Western seem to be in the matter of local control and certain elements of curriculum content (the heavy Soviet emphasis on political indoctrination, for instance). A helpful circumstance in the Soviet case has been the economic importance of the area, and thus the relatively great numbers of children involved. With a population of 6.9 million in the whole Soviet North, of whom perhaps one million are of school age, it is much easier to obtain the resources required to build up a good program.

Further study, preferably in close collaboration with Soviet educators, would be very desirable. It could provide important lessons that might be applied in other parts of the north.

Notes

1. S.A. Chekhoyeva and G.A. Baryshev, comps. Prosveshcheniye na kraynem severe, Sbornik 19, Leningrad, "Prosveshcheniye," 1981, 161 p.

2. It is almost impossible to be consistent over the names of peoples and their languages when presented in an English context. I make no claim to have succeeded, but I hope there is some clarity.

3. S.S. Savoskul. Dynamics of the peoples of the Soviet North. Polar Record, Vo. 19., No. 19, 1978, p. 148.

4. Ch.M. Taksami. Unpublished MS, c. 1982.

5. Brian D. Silver. The status of national minority languages in Soviet education: an assessment of recent changes. Soviet Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1, 1974, pp. 34-35.

6. G.N. Volkov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981) (see Note 1), pp. 17-18.

7. Savoskul (see Note 3), p. 148.

8. G.N. Nilol'skaya in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 84.

9. Quoted in E. Goldhagen ed. Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union (New York, 1966), p. 132.

10. A.F. Boytsova and A.A. Kudrya in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), pp. 87-89.

11. N.I. Melyakov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), pp. 29-34. A more detailed history of teacher training for the north is given by L.V. Belikov in F. Darnell (ed.), Education in the North (1972), p. 69.

12. S.I. Balabanov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 13.

13. N.I. Melyakov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 39.

14. A. Danilov. Cultural situations and education in the Soviet North. In F. Darnell (ed.), Education in the North (1972), p. 69.

15. S.I. Balabanov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 6.

16. G.N. Volkov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 21.

17. Yu.B. Strakach. Traditsii trudovogo vospitaniya u narodov Taymyra v nashe vremya. Sovetskaya Etnografiya, 1962, No. 3, pp. 44-46.

18. Ye.M. Prokof'yeva in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), p. 68.

19. S.I. Balabanov in Chekhoyeva and Baryshev (1981), pp. 13-14.

20. Yu.B. Strakach. Etnograficheskaya podgotovka v Novosibirskom Gosudarstvennom Universitete. Sovetskaya Etnografiya, 1970, No. 3, pp. 173-75.

21. N. Grant. Soviet Education, Fourth Edition (Harmondsworth, 1979), pp. 35-41.

22. Savoskul (see Note 3), pp. 138-40.

# NATIVE EDUCATION: THE ALASKAN PERSPECTIVE

William G. Demmert, Jr.

## Introduction

With an aboriginal population of some 72,000 members scattered over one half million square miles,[1] Alaska has served as a crossroads for many events since the beginning of time. The aboriginal populations of North and South America are reputed to have used the Bering Land Bridge between 25,000 and 40,000 years ago as they moved across and down the continents.[2] Animals migrating to and from Asia also used the land bridge from time to time.[3] In more contemporary times, Anchorage serves as an important stopover point for flights to and from Europe and Asia.

Pre-historic Alaska required the development of different cultures with different skills because of its diverse climate and terrain. The migration patterns and different waves of people also dictated variations within its indigenous populations.[4] Alaska is known for having three distinct Native groups, the Aleut, the Eskimo, and the Indian populations. The Eskimo population is divided into two distinct language groups, the Inupiat and Yupik speakers. The Indians included three separate groups. The Athabaskan comprised many groups of people speaking one or another of several Athabaskan dialects and occupied a common territory in Central Alaska. They were not organized into formal tribes. The three Southeastern Indian tribes were the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, with the Tlingit occupying most of the territory from Controller Bay to Dixon Entrance. The Haida settled on the southwest coast of Prince of Wales Island, and the Tsimshian settled on Annette Island, south of Ketchikan. The culture and language of the various groups in Alaska were similar within geographic areas but in some cases significantly different between groups. For example, the Eskimo of the far north is different in appearance, temperament, culture, and language than the Tlingit of Southeast.[5]

The original educational system for each aboriginal community in Alaska may also have differed, but certain basic principles were common to the several groups. Various members of a local community were responsible for the education of the youth. In some cases, this meant the responsibility was met by members of the immediate family. In other cases, a member of the extended family or other members of the community were responsible. In all situations, the process was internal; that is, the authority and responsibility for educating the young belonged to members of the village in which the person lived. The customs, the language, and the skills were directed by local priorities and the environment in which the people existed. This practice changed dramatically with the coming of Russian and later American schools.

A Historical Perspective

I pointed out earlier that parents, members of the extended family, or the community have generally had the primary responsibility for transmitting to their children the knowledge and skills necessary to keep them caring, to create for them a sense of belonging, and to provide them with the means to feed themselves. "This process probably began with simple food gathering and hunting skills, a need for companionship, and an instinct to survive."[6] In the Tlingit's early history, the young man child was taught what he needed to know by a maternal uncle. His education began at an early age, from the day he learned to walk, with a daily bath in the ocean. He was eventually taught the skills necessary to survive in his environment. There was no failure, for he was taught well and could compete with any person or group. This was a source of great pride to the uncle, to the young man, and to the family as well as to the community.

After the arrival of the Russian, this process deteriorated. Gradually, Native children were shifted from learning in their own environment and from their people to learning in a classroom and from people from another culture. In all cases, the process

became external; that is, the responsibility for educating Native youth became the responsibility of someone or some group outside the community. The education system in Alaska as a formal process in the classroom started with the Russian schools. Mission, Bureau of Indian Affairs, territorial, state-operated, and public schools as we know them today gradually succeeded one another.[7]

Russian schools were of three types: public schools under the control of the Russian-American Company, religious schools under the Russian-Greek Orthodox Church, and government schools. Company schools were designed for training future personnel. Government schools were available for the sons of company officials, and religious schools were designed to Christianize the Natives by teaching them to read the scriptures.[8]

With the transfer of property belonging to the Russian American Company to the United States under the Treaty of Cession on March 30, 1867 (and the unauthorized transfer of title to some 580,107 square miles of land, finally resolved by the Alaska Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971),[9] the missionary era of education began for the Alaskan Native. American churches began to fill the void created by Russian withdrawal after 1867. The missions started schools in various parts of Alaska. "The Russian-Greek Orthodox Missions were operating schools in Nushagak and St. Michael by this time. The Swedish Evangelical and Moravian churches led in the establishment of schools among the Eskimos. Schools at Golovin, Kangekosook (Kangusuk), Koyuk, Kotzebue, and Unalakleet were opened by the Swedish Evangelical or Covenant Church. The Moravians moved into Akiak, Bethel, Kalskag, Quiegaluk, and Tuluksak. Other schools were established by the Presbyterians at Gambell and Barrow, by the Episcopalians at Point Hope, by the Congregational Church at Cape Prince of Wales, and by the Roman Catholic Church at St. Joseph's on the Yukon Delta."[10]

Sheldon Jackson, General Agent of Education in Alaska, submitted the first report on Education in Alaska to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior in 1886. He described the

state of educational opportunity in various communities and among some of the aboriginal groups. He notes that the Innuit, with the exception of those in Southern Alaska, have had no educational or religious opportunities outside of their traditional systems. He also notes that they had not yet been influenced by the customs or innovations introduced by the Russian or Euro/American immigrants. The school listed for the Innuit to the south is located on Spruce Island near Kodiak. It was closed at the time of the report because no teacher was available.

Sheldon Jackson described the Aleuts and Creoles (children of Russian fathers and Native women) as well educated and very religious. Some of the best physicians, traders, and accountants were Aleuts, especially during the Russian period. Veniaminoff, an early Russian missionary priest and bishop who eventually became Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in Moscow, had provided an Aleutian alphabet and grammar for use in the Russian American Company's and Church's education system. Jackson mentioned only three schools for the Aleuts, one in St. George, one in St. Paul, and one in Belkoffski at the end of the Alaska Peninsula.

In Jackson's report the Southeastern Tlingits are referred to by village. Schools had been established for the Chilkat in 1880, the Hoonah in 1881, the Auke in 1882, the Taku in 1882, the Stikine in 1878, the Tongass in 1884, and the Sitkas as early as 1805, with a permanent school finally established in 1880 with the help of the Navy commanders in Sitka. The Hydah (Haida) inhabitants of the west coast of Prince of Wales Island are described as warlike, great artisans, and having had a school established on the 22nd of August 1881.[11] In March 1885 the Secretary of Interior (H.M. Teller) requested the U.S. Commissioner of Education to develop and implement a plan of education for the Territory. Commissioner of Education John Eaton requested the appointment of Sheldon Jackson as a general agent of education.[12] This was accomplished on April 11, 1885, and the establishment of public schools in Alaska was complete.

Jackson's efforts to establish schools and provide them with supplies met with some resistance. This opposition peaked when on August 19, 1885, Sheldon Jackson was arrested by the Deputy Marshal and escorted off the steamer as it was preparing to depart Sitka for communities in which schools were located. Jackson was delayed by the Marshal until the vessel departed. The next steamer brought official news of the removal of the officials responsible for the harassment of Sheldon Jackson.[13]

It is interesting to note that during this early period of schooling for Natives there were several teachers representing aboriginal populations from Alaska and the lower forty-eight states.[14] Sheldon Jackson points out that the teachers brought in from outside Alaska were not adequately trained to deal with the people, the climate, and the rural isolation. Jackson notes that they became depressed in their work and believed institutes would help them become better prepared to teach in Alaska.[15]

These early public schools were mission schools subsidized by the federal government. In 1899 local communities were authorized to set up school boards, select teachers, and establish schools. Racial problems were first reported in 1902 where the school board in Nome neglected to make provision for Eskimo children to attend school. In 1905, with the passage of the Nelson Act, schools for white children outside of incorporated towns fell under the authority and responsibility of the Governor of Alaska as an ex-officio Superintendent of Public Instruction. The education of Native Alaskans remained the responsibility of the U.S. Secretary of Interior. This was the beginning of Alaska's two separate school systems.[16]

The U.S. Congress, with passage of the Act of March 3, 1917, authorized Alaska's territorial legislature to establish schools in Alaska under the authority of local governments. White children, as well as Native children and children of mixed blood whose parents had adopted customs of the white population, were eligible to attend. Generally, children from the Native communities

continued to attend federal schools. The territorial government carried out its responsibility by enacting a uniform school act and taking control of the scattered school districts in the territory. The federal schools started under the Nelson Act remained intact.[17]

From the American point of view, the underlying philosophy of this early period was one of civilizing Native Alaskans and moving them as far away as possible from their basic culture. In 1926 even Native games and dances were banned in Native educational settings.[18] The Meriam Report of 1928, however, clearly pointed out that major changes in the educational programs for Indian students needed to be implemented if schools were to be more successful in educating them. The recommendations for these changes included a greater focus on the home environment where young children spent most of their time, an opportunity for the school curriculum to include more Indian cultural activities, and a training program for teachers that allowed better preparation for working with indigenous populations, recommendations which generally shifted authority and responsibility back to Natives for managing their own affairs. The report also stressed the importance of early childhood education.[19]

In Alaska the major issue in the 1930s was whether the federal government or the state government was responsible for providing education for the Native. The U.S. Congress provided authority to encourage school boards to educate untaxable Natives of mixed blood. The federal government was able to transfer the operation of forty-six schools to the territory between 1942 and 1954. In 1959 when Alaska became a state, the new constitution required the state to assume responsibility for educating all of its citizens (including Natives). Initially, the state could not afford to add the cost of operating Bureau of Indian Affairs schools to its budget.[20] Since the Alaskan oil rush and the resulting wealth through the late 1970s, Alaska has made several direct attempts to work out an agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to take over responsibility for all federal

schools in Alaska. A primary example of this transfer was the 1983 federal closure of the BIA-run Mt. Edgecumbe Boarding School. The state has worked out an agreement with the federal government that will allow that school to open again for the 1985-86 school year as a state-operated institution.[21]

Major Events Affecting Educational Opportunities for Native Alaskans

In 1832 the U.S. Congress created a Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He was to be in charge of all matters arising out of Indian relations, which included direction and management of all Indian affairs. Two years later the legal description of Indian country was established along with provisions for the organization of the Department of Indian Affairs. The Act of March 3, 1849, created the Department of the Interior and transferred the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the War Department to this new agency.[22]

When the United States signed the Treaty of Cession in 1867 with Russia, transferring European title of Alaska to the United States, provisions were included in Article 3 to address questions of aboriginal title and governance. The Organic Act of 1884 and the more recent Alaska Statehood Act both postponed the issue of defining Native land rights, which were finally clarified in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.[23] Sections 12 and 13 of the Organic Act addressed questions of educational need and responsibility. The Act of January 27, 1905, provided for the construction and maintenance of roads and the establishment of schools in Alaska. It was under this statute that the Governor of Alaska also became the ex-officio chief state school officer. This statute, under Section 7, segregated Indian and Eskimo children from the schools attended by white children and children of mixed blood that had adopted the ways of the new settlers.[24]

The question of Indian and Alaskan Native U.S. citizenship was unsettled until the Citizenship Act of 1924 made all non-citizen Indians born within the United States and its territories American citizens.[25] Citizenship did not alter the Indians' rights to tribal or other Indian property rights, thus preserving tribal rights derived from treaties.[26] For Alaskan Natives, the question of federal-Indian relationships was theoretically settled under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA). In fact, there are still questions, and the U.S. government continues to provide special programs, special tax exempt status extended to lands conveyed under the Act, and Alaskans have been included expressly as beneficiaries in all major Indian legislation since passage of ANCSA. In addition, a continuing fiduciary relationship has been acknowledged judicially between Alaskan Natives and the federal government.[27]

The Snyder Act of November 2, 1921, authorized the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to direct expenditures of Congress for the benefit, care, and general assistance of Indians in the United States. This law, expanded by subsequent legislation, provides congressional authority for expenditures for most of the BIA's activities, including health, education, employment, administration of Indian property, and irrigation.

In 1934 the Johnson-O'Malley Act was passed authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to provide for Indian education, medical attention, agricultural assistance, and other services via contract with a state or territory. The program has become a major source of money for Indian tribes and Alaskan Native groups for educational programs. In Alaska the focus has been early childhood education and academic support for students in the schools.[28]

Several major events in the past few years have significantly influenced educational opportunities for Native students or the school systems they attend in Alaska. In 1965 the federal government passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It

has provided billions of dollars for American education over the years, and two parts of that legislation provide direct support to Native Alaskans. Title I provides monies for the educationally and economically disadvantaged, and Title VII provides monies for bilingual programs designed to teach English to non-English speakers. Under Title I, virtually all rural Native students were given opportunity to concentrate on building academic skills in basic areas like reading, mathematics, and language arts. Under Title VII, programs were established in many schools to begin concentrating on developing English language skills among children whose home language was other than English. This program eventually helped emphasize the importance of establishing a sound first language base before attempting to transfer the focus to a second language, or at least provide opportunities for bilingualism (that is, provide opportunities to develop both the first and second language skills concomitantly).

In 1971 the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, under the leadership of Dr. Frank Darnell, established the Center for Northern Educational Research. This Center, now called the Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, was originally created to begin looking at problems and solutions to Native education issues in the state. It led the way to scholarly studies of issues surrounding Native education in rural communities. Most of the research of rural or Native education has been done by faculty of the Center. One of the most important pieces of work done by this group was the decentralization of Alaska's state-operated school system. Members served as a conduit for discussion and research of the project. The state was operating all rural schools outside of the organized boroughs and city school districts. They found that the system covered too many schools, too much territory, and could not be effectively managed. They also found that local communities were looking for more authority and responsibility for their own schools--there was a need for a sense of local ownership. In 1975 the state system was decentralized into twenty-one regional educational attendance areas, each with its own elected school board. The impetus for this event came from

rural communities interested in local control, but the movement was strongly supported by professional educators, legislators, and university people. It did not do all it was designed to do, but the system that has emerged is viewed as a positive step in giving local communities a greater sense of ownership over the schools their children attend.[29]

On December 18, 1971, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was signed into law by the President of the United States. In general terms, the Act allowed the Natives to keep 40 million acres of land, paid Natives $962.5 million, and established first twelve and then thirteen regional business corporations. All eligible Native villages were required to form corporations as either profit or nonprofit organizations. All Alaskan Natives of one-fourth blood or more were eligible stockholders in a regional and village corporation.[30] This piece of legislation caused significant changes in the Alaskan political, social, and economic arenas. The demand and the impacts of those changes are far reaching and will be evaluated by historians of the future.

In the areas of education and training, the demands were nothing short of traumatic. The need for Natives as trained managers, educators, lawyers, and other professionals could not be met then, and they are not being met now. The state, the Native community, and the U.S. government are still recovering from the effects of that legislation. They are just beginning to understand some of the ramifications and are searching for solutions to questions that have been raised. The importance of education, training, professionalism, and an informed populace has been realized by the Native communities in Alaska, and they are placing a higher and higher priority on educational activity.

Title IV, Public Law 92-318, commonly referred to as the Indian Education Act of 1972, created several programs that have served the Native communities in Alaska well. The law authorized monies for special programs for Indians/Natives attending public schools, offered an opportunity for parent committees to help

design the programs their children attended, offered Indian tribes and organizations an opportunity to start and operate their own schools, provided monies for experimental programs, and provided monies for college scholarships and programs that led to jobs. Implementation of the law probably provided more jobs for professional Indian educators than any other effort in the history of Indian education.[31] During the 1982-83 school year, Alaska received $8,551,377 out of a total Title IV budget of $77,852,000.[32] The monies were used for early childhood education programs; tutoring students in academic areas important to school success; culturally related activities focusing on the arts, oral history, customs, and traditions; curriculum development; and other educational programs Native Alaskan students and their parents were interested in.

In 1975 the U.S. government passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. The law clarifies and consolidates the federal government's responsibility (specifically the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, the current Secretaries of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Education) to contract with and make grants to Indian tribes and organizations to operate federal service programs, including education. Natives in the state of Alaska have only taken advantage of the law in service areas outside of education, with only five Native communities organizing contract schools in the state (a contract school is one that is funded by the federal government and allows a Native group or organization to run that school). The policy established or reinforced by the "Indian Self-Determination Act" was one of allowing programs run for Indians by the government to one of allowing programs funded by the federal government to be run by Indians for themselves.[33]

The most recent action affecting the State of Alaska and its responsibility to rural communities (which are predominantly Native) was the Molly Hootch case. The State of Alaska was sued on behalf of Alaska Native secondary students, charging that the State Constitution required an educational opportunity for all of

its secondary students in their communities of residence. The case was settled by a court-supervised consent decree, with the State agreeing to provide schooling for all of its elementary and secondary students. The Regulations provide that a child may not be required to live away from the local community in which he or she resides to obtain an education (Alaska Dept. of Administration, 1977, Code 05.030). Either the governing body of the school district shall provide a secondary school, or, if so requested by the local school committee, a partial secondary school program in each community in the district in which there are one or more children available to attend a secondary school; and there is an elementary school in the community operated by either the district or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Alaska Dept. of Administration, 1977, Code 05.040).[34]

Current Programs and Activities for Native Alaskan Students

In the spring of 1970 the Alaska State Department of Education was asked to participate in a national convention organized to look into the problems American Indians and Alaskan Natives were having as students participating in the nation's state and federally supported school systems. The response from the Alaska State Department of Education was that there were no problems and that Alaskan Native students were treated the same as all other students.[35] There have been a large number of changes since then. Nationally, the National Indian Education Association was formed, the Indian Education Act of 1972 was passed, the Indian Self-Determination Act was created, and a large number of Indian tribes and organizations contracted with the federal government to plan for and operate their own schools.

Within the state of Alaska, the first contemporary program bringing culturally related activities into the public school system was implemented in Klawock in 1967-68.[36] Since that time, many changes have taken place, both in the attitude of professionals towards the education of Native students and in the educational opportunities offered. School districts have developed

programs under Title I for the educationally disadvantaged and under Title VII for bilingual education, both originally part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Title IV, the Indian Education Act of 1972, and the Johnson-O'Malley Act, from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, have both allowed the implementation of programs designed especially for Indian and Alaskan Native students. Most recent is the effective schooling movement, which has focused on the identification of programs that are associated with academic achievement of low income students in elementary schools, with several rural schools receiving recognition for the success they have achieved in promoting the academic performance of their students. Of importance to teacher training institutions is the state-funded rural teacher training program. The program allows for a $7,000 annual loan for rural residents selected for teacher training programs. If a participant graduates with a teaching degree and teaches for five years, he/she will not have to pay the loan back--it is forgiven.

The University system has followed suit by developing programs specifically designed to benefit the rural/Native student. The University of Alaska-Fairbanks has consolidated a variety of programs for Native students under one administration. The Juneau campus has just revised its secondary education program to provide rural teachers a broad general background as well as focused majors in particular content areas. The University of Alaska-Rural Education, based in Anchorage, serves all parts of the state outside of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Southeast Alaska. The program reached some 250 Native students directly during 1983-84.[37]

The following is a summary of some of the activities that have taken place over the past few years or a description of some of the programs that are now in operation.

## Centralized Correspondence Study

The Department of Education offers correspondence courses available to all students in all communities located in the state. The program currently serves approximately 1,200 elementary and secondary students annually in a wide variety of communities and locations. It has an annual budget of $2,579,300 for fiscal year 1985. There have been 202 high school graduates since the 1970-1971 school year.[38] The State began funding correspondence study in 1939 for students living in remote areas of the state. It has been redesigned to serve any student (in grades kindergarten through twelve) living anywhere in the state. There is no charge to students. All textbooks, supplies, and postage are provided by the program.[39]

## Educational Technology

In 1980-81 the State of Alaska passed legislation creating an instructional telecommunication network known as "Learn Alaska." The University of Alaska (UA) and the Alaska Department of Education (DOE) jointly manage the network. The two parts of the network include audioconferencing and instructional television. The audioconferencing network handled more than 3,300 conferences during the 1982-83 academic year, handling more conferences per month than any other facility in the world. The system is capable of linking up with any telephone, can link up to 80 sites in a single audioconference, and several sites together in simultaneous conferences. The instructional television network is the first and largest low-power TV network in the country. The network broadcasts 365 days per year, 24 hours per day, and can reach more than 240 communities. Programming on the network includes education programs for preschool, kindergarten through grade twelve, postsecondary/higher education, continuing education, general education, and special interest programming. Onsite volunteers serve as coordinators and place trouble calls when necessary, distribute catalogs and schedules, and help keep users informed of network changes in schedules.[40]

Alaskan public schools lead the nation in the number of computers per student. With one computer for every 21.8 students, Alaskan schools have a great opportunity for teachers and students to use this tool as effectively as the business world. Students/teachers currently use computers in activities like drill and practice, tutorial instruction, simulations, and problem solving as a supplement and extension of existing curriculum. Use of the computer as a word processor is the second most widespread use in educational settings. The State has developed nine Individual Study by Technology (IST) courses for high school students with 2,929 students in 124 schools taking advantage of the medium. The Department's Office of Instructional Services has an agreement with the Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium which allows the distribution of its software at a reduced price. This material is being used in 364 Alaskan schools.[41]

Effective Schooling Project

The Governor of Alaska in 1980 (Jay S. Hammond) asked the State Board of Education for a status report on the schools of Alaska. In response to the Governor's request, a special task force on effective schools was created. In 1981 the task force presented its report, clarifying responsibilities of a school, identifying practices with evidence of effectiveness that were supported by research and practical experience, and including recommendations to put those practices into operation in all Alaskan schools.[42] That report, based on a nationwide project supported by the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., proposed a list of goals for education and recommended a standardized minimum curriculum for elementary, middle, and senior high schools. The task force also provided a list of effective schooling conditions.[43]

One of the best summaries on effective schooling practices is provided by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Its report is divided into classroom, school, and district characteristics and practices. Under Classroom Characteristics

and Practices, the list reveals the following: instruction is guided by a preplanned curriculum; there are high expectations for student learning; students are carefully oriented to lessons; instruction is clear and focused; learning progress is monitored closely; students are retaught when they don't understand; class time is used for learning; there are smooth, efficient classroom routines; instructional groups formed in the classroom fit instructional needs; standards for classroom behavior are explicit; personal interactions between teachers and students are positive; and incentives and rewards for students are used to promote excellence.

School Characteristics and Practices show that everyone emphasizes the importance of learning; strong leadership guides the instructional program; the curriculum is based on clear goals and objectives; students are grouped to promote effective instruction; school time is used for learning; learning progress is monitored closely; discipline is firm and consistent; there are high expectations for quality instruction; incentives and rewards are used to build strong motivation; parents are invited to be involved; teachers and administrators continually strive to improve instructional effectiveness; and conditions for learning are pleasant.

District Characteristics and Practices indicate that high expectations pervade the organization; policies and procedures support excellence in student performance; student learning is checked regularly; improvement efforts are monitored and supported; excellence is recognized and rewarded; and curriculum planning ensures continuity. "The effective schooling research base identifies schooling practices and characteristics associated with measurable improvements in student achievement and excellence in student behavior. These 'effective schooling practices' include elements of schooling associated with a clearly defined curriculum; focused classroom instruction and management; firm, consistent discipline; close monitoring of student performance; and strong instructional leadership."[44]

Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools

In 1905 schools in Alaska were segregated into two systems, those run by the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs) and those run by the Territory of Alaska.[45] Negotiations have been going on for several years between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State Department of Education to transfer those schools to the State. Transfers have been taking place since 1938, with the transfer of the Douglas school. All schools will finally be transferred during the summer of 1985.[46] There are also five contract schools, commonly referred to as "638 schools," that have been operating as independent school districts. They are requesting legislation that would allow them to retain independent status after the transfer.[47] The five BIA elementary schools that remain under the Bureau system are kindergarten to grades six or eight, with one to grade twelve. The schools average sixty students each and generally use the standardized curriculum implemented by the Juneau BIA Area Office several years ago. This curriculum allowed for a bilingual program and allowed for the coverage of certain materials by certain grades.

In 1979 the federal government began implementing P.L. 95-561, which significantly changed the organizational structure of BIA schools. This law provided for school boards with authority similar to public school boards, provided direct funding of schools under a formula specifically designed for a school's size and location, and allowed superintendents to hire teachers from local areas. Although there was some apprehension about how the new law would work, it appears that the changes have been positive in nature. School boards have taken their new responsibilities seriously. Hiring teachers locally has reduced the time required to actually get someone on location and has reduced the cost, and boards have begun changing school curricula to meet their local priorities. The school faculty has become more stable over the past few years, with administrators and teachers averaging five years of local service. There appears to be little

or no dropout problem with the students that leave the elementary schools and that attend local public high schools under the REAAs. Students stay in school through the eighth grade and move on to high school. It will be interesting to note whether the stability of teachers and the apparent student satisfaction with the schools remain under the state system once it is implemented.[48]

University Programs

The Alaska Native Language Center (now called the Alaska Native Languages Program) was established at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks by the State Legislature in 1972. It serves as a linguistic research center and is considered the major center in the United States for the study of Eskimo and Northern Athabaskan languages.[49] In 1981 the Alaska Native Programs was created from a group of six Native education programs. These six programs are the Alaska Native Art Center, the Alaska Native Language Program, Alaska Native Studies, Cross-Cultural Communications, Special Services, and Student Development. The primary mission of this group is to promote Alaska Native student college completion and understanding of the Native community through research, curriculum development, and instruction. Degrees are offered in Alaska Native Studies, Applied Linguistics for Alaska Native Languages, Yup'ik, and Inupiaq Languages.[50]

In 1975 the University of Alaska established the Rural Education Program based on a recommendation by Alaskan Native organizations and groups. The program now operates under a Dean of Rural Education with local advisory councils and a statewide policy advisory council. The local councils assist in local or regional planning and send representatives to the statewide council for statewide policy issues. Rural Education offers an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Applied Science degree through the University of Alaska Community College System. The Associate of Arts degree encompasses five disciplines: Communications, Social Science, Humanities, Natural Science/Mathematics,

and Applied Sciences. The Associate of Applied Science degree program is awarded by the Kuskokwim and Northwest Community Colleges. Rural Education delivers services through thirteen centers to ninety villages covering 224,000 square miles. Programs are offered in Vocational-Technical Education, Alaska Native Health Careers, Community Health Aide Certificates, Community Health Practitioner, and a wide variety of other upper division classes through the Anchorage and Fairbanks campuses. Outreach classes and programs in Southeast Alaska are offered through the University of Alaska-Juneau campus.[51]

The University of Alaska-Juneau has recently developed a teacher training program designed to prepare rural teachers to better meet the demands of small schools. In the past, teacher training programs allowed students to develop majors in narrow fields, like history. The new program at Juneau requires a broad major in the social sciences, fine arts, or language arts and a minor in a narrow area in another field. This program allows a teacher to develop competence in a variety of subject areas under a broad discipline and indepth knowledge in a specific area. The teacher is better prepared to teach a greater variety of subjects rather than a narrowly defined subject.

The Juneau campus, like the Fairbanks campus, is making a special effort to begin serving regional Native populations. The training of teachers; recruitment of students; research of faculty (Wauters, et al., Hagstrom, et al., Greenberg, et al., Demmert, et al.); and proposed curriculum design changes all provide a new focus on rural/Native students.[52] A pilot three-week precollege academic program was held during the summer of 1984 to introduce rural/Native students to college life and the pressures they would find when they attended college in the fall. The objective of the program was to teach thinking, reasoning, and study skills. The students attended class six hours a day. Three hours were spent in physical science. In addition, activities like kayaking, swimming, basketball, going to movies, shopping, and listening to guest speakers were provided. The

program has led to a major proposal for changes in the way the University organizes class size, housing opportunities, and student advising for entering freshmen.

Public School Activity

In February 1985 the eleventh Alaska Bilingual-Multicultural Conference was held in Anchorage. It is a major activity of the Alaska Department of Education and is jointly planned by the Alaska State Advisory Council for Bilingual-Bicultural Education, the Alaska Association for Bilingual Education, and the Department of Education. Thirty-one of the fifty-three Alaska school districts provide bilingual-bicultural education programs. There are over 9,500 students with more than one hundred different language backgrounds served by the State's bilingual-bicultural program. These programs provide for full or partial maintenance of a student's first language or provide for the teaching of English skills and concepts.[53]

Many schools in Alaska are trying exciting and innovative approaches to education. At Kotzebue Elementary School, Northwest Arctic School District, fifty pre-schoolers from age four to five attend a two and one-half hour day in class. The youngsters are engaged in activities that teach language, auditory, visual, gross, and fine motor skills. Art is a daily activity. Developing skills, especially where English is a second language at home, is a high priority.[54]

At Kenai Junior High School, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, administration and staff set out to eliminate student failures. Academic intervention teams were created to bring together faculty, students, and parents to brainstorm ways to help students in serious academic difficulty and to support those students in overcoming their difficulties. Recommendations have included counseling, changing a student to a different class, placing students in gifted and talented programs, and/or establishing reward systems at school as well as in the home. Peer

tutoring (with student tutors actually attending classes, helping to take notes, study for tests, and meeting with tutees before or during school to review for tests or check completed assignments) has worked well as part of the effort to improve student success. The record shows that all tutees who were failing a class before receiving the help had achieved passing grades by the end of the quarter. Success did not just happen. The tutors were carefully selected and trained. They studied behavior management, task analysis, and other recognized techniques of good teaching and communication. The tutors selected for the program were matched with up to four students that had requested peer tutors. Each tutor received one elective credit for a year of tutoring.[55]

The Juneau School District's Indian Studies Program is designed to bring Southeast Alaska Native experts into regular classrooms to supplement the standard curriculum. School Board policy requires that instruction on Tlingit culture be included in the various grade levels as an integral part of the kindergarten to grade twelve social studies curriculum (adopted September 9, 1971). A scope and sequence of class activities and requirements was presented and adopted on May 18, 1982, and serves as a guide for the various presentations made by members of the Indian Studies Program. The program offerings are currently undergoing a review and analysis process for improving quality of material and information. The University of Alaska-Juneau education staff is involved in that review.[56]

Southeast Alaska Tribal Activity

The Sealaska Heritage Foundation, created by the Sealaska Regional Native Corporation, is a Native organization responsible for harnessing all available resources to preserve, promote, and maintain the cultures and heritage of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people for the benefit of present and future generations and the public. The Foundation is responsible for several programs. Their scholarship program provides scholarships to Alaska Native students seeking higher education opportunities.

The heritage study program provides Alaskan Natives grants to learn traditional skills from highly skilled instructors. The language and cultural studies program assists local communities in creating cultural and resource materials as well as producing their own language and cultural materials. Their tribal archives acquire, preserve, and manage records and materials of the member tribes that are donated by institutions, organizations, and individuals. Their traditional celebrations create, share, and record traditional dances, music, and song. The traditional music program records and transcribes traditional songs, their history, and their origin. The oral history program records, transcribes, and translates information from elders about their lives, culture, and history. Their collections and other holdings are very important parts of the efforts to record, preserve, and demonstrate the heritage of the Southeastern Alaska Native.[57]

Concluding Statement

There are many exciting educational programs in Alaska for rural and Native students through federal grants (Johnson O'Malley, Title IV, Bilingual programs); through regular school budgets in communities that are willing to try new and innovative activities; and through projects such as Learn Alaska, the University's Rural Education programs, and the focus on effective schooling research. Supporting the continuation of these activities is information that tells us Native students are doing better in school (especially contract schools), test scores on nationally validated tests have gone up, attendance is better (students are staying in school longer), and larger and larger numbers of Native students are attending institutions of higher education where higher and higher percentages are succeeding.[58]

All of these efforts are fine and worth continuing, but in Alaska there are two persistent problems: generally, in larger city schools, fairly large numbers of Native students are still dropping out of school or barely surviving, and generally, there are fairly large numbers of rural Native students that complete

their schooling but do not reach national academic standards for high school graduates. The numbers in both categories are getting smaller but are still large enough to to considered problems that must be dealt with.[59]

I have some very strong opinions about what we, as parents, educators, and communities, must do to succeed with children that we are still failing to motivate academically. First of all, the value we place on an education must be of the highest priority and include academic goals, physical goals, as well as social-cultural goals. The atmosphere in the home, in the community, and in the school must be one that promotes the success of all children in meeting academic, physical, and social/cultural standards in school and in life. Second, we as parents must create a home environment for young children (including aspects of prenatal care) that sets a proper base for learning those skills necessary to succeed academically once our children start school. These include nurturing cultural/social development, working on kinesthetic skills, language development (and other academically based components), and stimulating intellectual curiosity. Third, leaders in the community and community members at large must provide the attention required to stimulate and hold general support and high expectations for the educational institutions in that community. Fourth, the schools must attract and hold the best people they can find for instructional/administrative faculty and develop a program that reflects the desires and expectations of the parents and community, while stimulating them to exciting and higher goals. The schools must reflect the cultures of the community in a way that creates the interest and support they need from the community in order to succeed with the students from that community. Fifth, the goals and expectations that we, as parents, communities, and schools develop must be consistent, providing opportunities for our young adults in the society in which they choose to live. Students should expect and be given an opportunity to contribute to society--to their homes, communities, and outside that circle when the desire and skills are there to do so. When these priorities receive widespread adoption, and

only then, the good work and progress we have begun will begin to render the full fruits of our endeavors and our goals.

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